PRINCIPLES OF SALESMANSHIP

HAROLD WHITEHEAD

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PRINCIPLES OF SALESMANSHIP

A TEXTBOOK FOR COLLEGES AND SCHOOLS

By

HAROLD WHITEHEAD

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To My Father

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PREFACE

The first edition of this work appeared in 1917. In this edition there has been a complete revision, hardly a section remaining in the same form as before. The basic structure and arrangement of the volume have been maintained. The changes have been in the way of development, enlargement, and improvement, largely as a result of the suggestions and contributions of literally hundreds of instructors in salesmanship and of sales executives in a variety of lines throughout the country.

Perhaps the best statement of the purpose of the work may be made by repeating here some points of the preface to the original edition.

Men vary greatly in their ability to sell goods. Some are successful because of an inborn aptitude for selling; others succeed through study and practice in the business world. Whatever a man's natural ability may be, it can be developed and made much more effective by the systematic study and application of the principles of salesmanship.

This statement is borne out by the experience of many large concerns which have solved the difficult problem of marketing an expensive specialty on an international scale. Such firms could not possibly sell their goods through the length and breadth of the civilized world if their sales depended solely upon the efforts of men who are naturally salesmen. They have been compelled to take the average man as they find him, train him in the methods of the experienced salesman, and then try him out. Experience proves that whatever natural ability a man may possess, his value as a sales producer will be incom-

parably greater if he is trained to use his *analytical* and *reasoning* faculties as well as the natural intuition of the born salesman.

The object of this book is to present an analysis of salesmanship in a series of lessons, each of which deals with a distinct phase of the subject. The author trusts that the experienced, successful salesman who works largely by intuition will read the book with interest and also with profit; that the younger salesman who analyzes his failures and is always striving to do better will find suggestions that he can profitably utilize; and that the novice who assimilates and puts into practice the suggestions given in these pages may thereby save himself many disappointments and set-backs in his chosen calling.

It so happens that the author combines a varied experience as a salesman with a practical knowledge of the difficulty of teaching salesmanship. While closely allied with the personal equation, salesmanship is also dependent upon the variables of time, circumstance, and the mood of the buyer. The author feels keenly that the kind of textbook needed is one which reduces this complexity of time, mood, knack, and personality to a practical course of study which will prove its worth in the school of experience.

The aim of this book, therefore, is to make the study of salesmanship as practical, interesting, and definite as possible. To that end definite means are suggested for the attainment of definite ends. The theory of the subject is advanced with careful consideration of its practical application. "Practice, practice—and yet more practice," may be the formula for success in any art, and the art of salesmanship is no exception to this rule. But the more this practice is intelligently directed by theory which appeals to reason and to common sense, the more rapidly will the desired goal of success be attained.

The problems in Appendix A, devised for the purpose of developing original and effective thinking, are the outgrowth

of many years' experience in presenting the subject both in classroom and before business organizations. They demand ingenuity as well as understanding; merely reading the text will by no means suffice, for in order to develop the skill and personal dexterity that the salesman requires, the student must not only know what tools to use but must also practice constantly in using them. Mention should also be made of the many books on salesmanship and related subjects in the lists of collateral reading in Appendix B. The reader is urged to make extensive use of this collateral material in order to gain as broad an understanding as possible of the manifold applications of the principles of salesmanship.

The author takes this public opportunity to express his gratitude to the many friends whose constructive criticism has aided in the work of revision. For assistance of a more intimate nature throughout the book special thanks are owing to Professor J. C. Scammell of the Department of English and Professor O. T. Smith of the Department of Sales Relations, colleagues of the author on the Faculty of the College of Business Administration of Boston University. Mr. Scammell has been of especial help in the chapters on "Straight Thinking" and "Effective Diction."

HAROLD WHITEHEAD

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Principles of Salesmanship

CHAPTER I

THE STUDY AND PRACTICE OF THE ART OF SALESMANSHIP

Selling Success Means Business Success.—All-round business ability can be developed in no better way than by closely studying and practicing salesmanship. Even if the sale of an article entails little more than mere order-taking or peddling, that experience will be a valuable one: for at the very least you acquire increased understanding of the points of view, prejudices, and personal biases of all sorts of people and you consequently become more accomplished and more confident in dealing with strangers on a business basis. This knowledge of human nature in relation to buying and selling is the foundation of business acumen. If you want to learn your weaknesses and eradicate them, if you wish to find out your crudities and tone them down, and if you mean to develop the best that is in you, select a high-grade commodity that demands real selling ability and then persist until you make a success of selling. The man who trains and develops himself in this way will be trained for success in most of the walks of life.

This is a sweeping statement. "The writer seems to claim rather too much for salesmanship," you remark. Let us analyze the proposition.

The Value of the Salesman's All-Round Training.—Consider the qualifications that are required for success in salesmanship. Perhaps a score might be listed, but we will mention only the most prominent.

1. First of all a salesman must acquire accurate and exhaustive knowledge of his line. No salesman can know too much about what he sells. Whether selling a highly complex and specialized product, such as a piece of machinery, or a large and varied line, such as one of the staples, or some kind of raw material, he must study his goods and their uses until he has the knowledge of the expert. The man who in addition to being an expert in any line is also a real salesman has that all-round business ability allied with knowledge of human nature which are needed in every important executive position.

2. He must be able to impart his knowledge to others logically and quickly. To do this he must have the ability to concentrate all his powers and faculties of thought and speech upon a given subject. The man who finds it hard to talk to the point will have difficulty in arresting and holding the attention of others.

3. He must possess tact in a high degree. The nature of his calling demands that at times he be aggressive or insistent or pertinacious. When in the presence of an irritable buyer or a buyer whose will is accustomed to dominate, only consummate tact will prevent a clash.

4. He must have the courage to press his offer upon the attention of those who are indifferent or even antagonistic. By his tact, his skill in argument, and his determination, he must change their attitude of mind.

5. He must be endowed with sufficient imagination to be able to put himself in the other man's place and picture the offer from the customer's point of view. Learning to meet all classes of business men on a level of equality and broad human sympathy is a large part of a salesman's training. Without

imagination as well as tact and courage he cannot create that unconscious feeling of sympathy which is essential for success in a competitive field, where the personality of the salesman often plays an important part.

6. He must be industrious and must discipline himself in the habit of industry when all the odds are against him. He works alone. He lacks the incentive of the time clock in office or factory to keep him steadily at the daily grind. Unless he acquires the self-control and the will power needed to force himself to stick to that grind when work runs against the grain, he will never go far as a salesman.

Universal Need of Salesmanship Qualifications.—All successful enterprises involve salesmanship in one form or another.

When a young man applies for his first position he is a salesman. He tries to sell in the best market his personality plus the knowledge and training he has acquired. When the young doctor, lawyer, preacher, or journalist starts his professional career he begins as a salesman selling his own services. The future retail or wholesale merchant has first to prove himself in the ranks of salesmanship. The manufacturer who fails to solve the problem of distribution and selling his goods (a problem which sometimes is more difficult in its solution than that of production) fails in his enterprise. Throughout life everyone who at any time succeeds in getting others to do his will may be said to have "sold" them his idea. Certainly teachers, ministers, lawyers, besides business men in every field, are constantly inducing others to co-operate with them. In principle they are salesmen.

Other things being equal, success in all these different walks of life depends primarily upon salesmanship. You may be an expert in your line, you may have a special fund of knowledge, you may be of exceptional intellectual ability; but if you lack any of the essential qualifications of salesmanship you are

handicapped. Your success in any career will be likely to be mediocre, for you will fail to secure backing or understanding or interest.

Salesmanship in History and Literature.—In the broader sense of the term, the special power and skill of the salesman is just the power and skill that has changed the course of history; again and again through the ages some leader has won the confidence and support of his community, of his nation, even of the world. Caesar, Columbus, Napoleon all "sold" their ideas just as surely as a salesman sells goods. Caesar's "Commentaries on the Gallic War" were written as publicity and propaganda to win political support for him at Rome. Through advertising his conquests in Gaul he secured increasing interest and support and became at last, in fact if not in name, emperor of the world. Had he but shown the honor and nobility of character that Lincoln did, the world might well have been a far better place today. So, too, with Napoleon; his ruthlessness and vanity brought destruction upon the splendor and true majesty that he had won through constructive planning and insight of exactly the same type as that which the salesman must possess. The lesson has not passed unheeded in business today; the unscrupulous and dishonorable "grab-it-all, anything-goes" policy has been discarded. The standards of Columbus and of St. Louis the Crusader, both of them supreme salesmen of great ideas, have been established more firmly than ever. Columbus, sure of the merits of his cause, refused to be daunted or discouraged, but persisted in trying ruler after ruler again and yet again until he had secured the needed funds; St. Louis, despite the thousand and one difficulties and heartbreaking failures facing him, rallied the nations to the cause of the restoration of the Holy Land to Christendom. Their fineness of motive and glow of enthusiasm and courage as well as their methods of attaining

support and confidence are typical of the true salesman of modern times.

In literature again we find the principles of salesmanship frequently exemplified. "Black Beauty" sold the doctrine of treating animals kindly to England and America and to thousands upon thousands in other nations all over the world. Elbert Hubbard's "Message to Garcia" has been translated into a score or more of languages and used by half a dozen great nations to drive home the value of prompt and well-planned action and of persisting in the face of opposition and discouragement. "Pickwick Papers" demonstrated the absurdity of imprisonment for debt, "Uncle Tom's Cabin" is the most effective argument against slavery that has ever appeared, Hans Anderson's "Ugly Duckling" is an immortal message of the hope that every one of us is entitled to. All these and a myriad more books have won their readers to believe and act in accordance with the ideas they set forth; they have sold their wares in a million homes.

What the Salesman Needs.—Salesmanship is a mental process. You cannot use force upon a buyer. You can neither hypnotize him nor coax him to buy against his will. Conviction of the advantage of an offer is the basis of every sale. Only after this conviction is established, first in the mind of the salesman and second in the mind of the buyer, will an agreement be reached or an order secured. To convince yourself you must have a thorough knowledge of your goods and the technical facts of the business, supported by confidence in the value of your offer, whether this relates to goods or to service.

To carry conviction to the mind of the buyer you must be equipped with arguments in favor of the offer and with arguments for profiting from the offer *now*; and these arguments must be sufficiently varied to appeal to every type of

mind. You also must have at your command an apt answer to numberless objections, any of which may be advanced as a reason for not buying, even though remotely or not at all connected with the offering.

Finally, to carry this conviction to the buyer's mind with the least effort and the maximum success in the largest possible number of cases, you must have personality. This is an all-inclusive term which comprises manner, appearance, address, tact, argumentative skill, and the force and strength of your character as a whole. Your personality must be such that it dominates where leadership is needed or tranquilizes where irritation and prejudice are present or stimulates where hesitation and procrastination are revealed. Your manner and method as a capable salesman must be such as insensibly attract almost every type of buyer and in no case irritate or offend.

Thus, in order to make the most of yourself as a salesman you must first of all analyze your goods, your buyers, and yourself.

Why Salesmanship Is Necessary.—Salesmanship may be defined as the art of presenting the advantages of an offer in a way which first arouses the desire to profit by it and then leads to prompt action.

If all goods were standardized and if they were made only in quantity to fill an existing demand, there would be little or no need for salesmanship. But commodities are frequently produced in greater quantity than is needed to fill the existing demand. Moreover they vary in price and utility. It becomes necessary to explain the reasons for these variations or to make clear the utility of a new product. In this way the existing demand is filled by the goods best fitted for the purpose or else a demand is created for new goods.

When typewriters were first introduced the customer had

to be shown the many advantages of using such a machine. He had to be taught how they save time, energy, and money. This aroused the desire to profit from their use and so a demand for typewriters was created. When naphtha soap was first sold the housewife had to be taught that the soap would wash clothes in cold water with very little rubbing. The utility of the new product had to be shown and proved. The same is true of every article termed a "specialty", with a name and an identity of its own, as distinguished from an article termed a "staple", the identity of which is lost in the bulk. If a new product suitable, say, for resoling shoes, were placed on the market, it would be given a special name, salesmanship would be called in to make clear the advantages of this specialty over leather, and thus a demand would be created.

The Function of the Salesman.—To fill an existing demand with the best goods produced for the purpose or to create a new demand for new products is the function of the salesman.

The salesman is a commercial messenger who acts as a link between various organizations concerned in the distribution of goods. As the representative of the manufacturer he may visit the wholesaler. As the representative of the wholesaler he may visit the retailer. Or as a retailer himself he may carry on his duties behind the counter of a store. Wherever employed his function is to serve as a medium of communication between the producer, dealer, and consumer.

A Scientific Method of Studying Salesmanship.—The study of salesmanship has often been presented under three heads—the goods, the customer, and the salesman himself. This arrangement has heretofore been adhered to in nearly every work on salesmanship that aims to be more than a collection of homilies on the subject. An analysis of some kind

is needed in order to reduce a subject complicated with so many variables into a practical course of instruction. And this triple classification seems at first view a good working arrangement.

In practice, however, this method of treating the subject presents serious difficulties. For one thing it is impossible arbitrarily to differentiate the study of the goods and the construction of the sales talk from the type of customer to whom the goods will be sold, since the appeal will depend as much upon the buyer's motive for making the purchase as upon the description of the goods themselves. In some forms of salesmanship a description of the goods and their merits is of comparatively small importance as compared with the ability to depict the advantages of an offer when viewed from other standpoints.

Then again the development of your personality cannot be considered as a thing apart from the every-day work of selling. It is of little use to suggest to you that you should cultivate certain essential qualities, such as courage, tact, pertinacity, courtesy, and what-not, unless a course of instruction can be mapped out which will dovetail into your daily work and will help you to acquire any essential trait in which you may feel yourself to be deficient.

A Practical Course of Study Which Brings Results.— The procedure adopted in this work follows the actual course that must be pursued in the practice of selling, i.e., the preparation that precedes the actual interview, the study of points that make for increasing comprehension of the subtleties requisite in thoroughly workmanlike salesmanship, and finally, a consideration of the means by which the last refinements of personal development can be achieved.

The first of these four sections (Chapters I to VI) presents the general and specific problems that the salesman must understand before attempting an interview. This involves

the basic principles on which all selling is founded and also the particular measures to be adopted in preparing for an interview. The student is carried to the point of locating his prospective customer.

The second section (Chapters VII to XVII) comprises the material both general and specific, that explains the methods of conducting a sales interview from the moment the salesman greets the customer to the parting words after the salesman has taken the order. The methods of precise and logical thinking and of direct and impressive speaking, of meeting and handling objections and excuses, as well as the successive steps to be taken in the course of each portion of the sales discussion, are each of them presented here.

The third section (Chapters XVIII to XXIII) deals with certain larger aspects of salesmanship that have already appeared in the preceding sections from time to time and now must receive independent and full consideration by themselves. Apart from the orderly progress of a sale, which has been the main subject of consideration so far, the student must gain understanding of the broad social problems involved in salesmanship, the means of establishing businesslike and friendly relations both with customers and with the various departments of his own firm, the leading types of customers that he encounters, and the functions and the characteristics of the sales department.

The fourth section (Chapters XXIV to XXIX discusses the qualities that the salesman must develop in order to achieve success. Until the nature of the salesman's work is clearly comprehended and its demand understood, the student can hardly appreciate the full value of self-development along certain very definite lines. Consequently, it is in this last section of all that these supreme essentials are treated in detail; from the very first chapter their importance has been more and more clearly suggested both in the rules laid down and in the

examples cited, but the full explanation of their nature and the means by which they can be cultivated are reserved for this final summation of the salesman's personality.

The Handicap of Working without Study and Training.—It is profitless to waste time in considering whether salesmanship has yet attained the dignity of a science or whether you as a salesman must be born and not made. To talk of the science of salesmanship is as nonsensical as to talk of the science of acting or the science of debating. The student should remember rather that salesmanship is an *art*. Like the forensic art of the advocate at the bar or the histrionic art of the actor on the stage, it demands careful preparation if the first attempts are to be anything but the bungling and crude efforts of the untrained amateur.

Some men are born advocates; others are born actors. Yet the fact remains that without training neither can prosper in his calling. Furthermore, many a man who lacks a natural gift for pleading or for acting may yet by careful training and persistent effort develop no mean ability in either direction.

Exactly the same rule applies to you as a salesman.

The advocate and the actor must put the theoretical side of their study to practical test in their respective callings. So must the salesman. Men everywhere have to be developed in the school of experience. But the salesman who for this reason elects to learn only in that hardest of all schools is as ill-equipped for his job as the actor who braves a public ordeal with a half-memorized part and without any clear notion of what he is going to do or say.

CHAPTER II

THE MOTIVES BEHIND ALL BUYING

The Salesman's Need of Understanding Human Nature.—One of the most important requirements in salesmanship is the understanding of human nature. Every time that the salesman undertakes to make a sale of any sort he is dealing with a prospective customer—a specimen of human nature—hence a knowledge of how people may be expected to act under given circumstances enables him not only to anticipate or predict a customer's reaction to a suggestion or an argument but also permits him to vary his sales method in such a way as to appeal most effectively to the individual with whom he is dealing.

A salesman who had a perfect understanding of human behavior would be 100 per cent successful in getting orders, for his knowledge would in the first place permit him to select as prospective customers only those to whom a sale could be made, and in the second place, it would also tell him exactly which of his many sales arguments and what sales factors he should use to accomplish his end most directly and surely.

Good salesmen understand human nature from their own experiences; they have acquired a working knowledge of sales psychology. But many salesmen never give a thought to the motives lying back of every purchase, and consequently fail to get the results that such knowledge would insure. Young salesmen have had too limited an amount of experience to be able to generalize from the results of their sales; without an understanding of the psychological factors they are gravely handicapped. A good salesman of firearms, for example,

would certainly not start a selling campaign in a community made up of persons belonging to a religious sect definitely opposed to the use of violence. He is able to predict at the start what the behavior of such individuals would be in reaction to his sales talk. The mediocre or inexperienced salesman, on the other hand, would lack the knowledge necessary to predict these reactions. This illustration of course represents the simplest kind of a situation; most sales require a considerable amount of knowledge of human behavior if the desired action is to be obtained.

Each Customer an Individual Problem.—The task of the salesman is further complicated by the fact that in general each prospective customer presents an entirely new problem for solution. In response to any given set of conditions of sale the behavior of a majority of the prospective customers may be very similar, but in minor respects the behavior will differ. It is just these slight differences in behavior which make the salesman's work both interesting and stimulating. Unless however, the salesman is so negligent as to rely upon the hit-or-miss method of discovering these differences in action, he must formulate principles by which he may scientifically "size up" his prospect.

If the crop of potatoes from a given field were carefully examined to determine the weight of each individual potato, it would be found that the difference in weight between the smallest and the largest would be very great: a large number would weigh fairly close to the average weight; others would come between the weight of the average and the extreme light or heavy weights. The greater the difference between the average weight and any other weight, the fewer will be the number of potatoes in that group. Just as great differences are to be found in the case of any mental trait in human beings; a good salesman in dealing with a prospective customer would

like to estimate to what extent that customer represents the average man with respect to any given trait and also how far he diverges from that average. As an illustration, consider the life insurance salesman; sometimes he deals with men who have the average amount of love of family, more often with individuals who possess that trait in degrees greater or less than that average. If he knew that the prospective customer represented less than the average amount of the "love of family" trait he would recognize that he had more resistance to overcome and his whole selling scheme would have to be adjusted to meet that situation. He might even find it desirable to shift the weight of his argument from the need of securing comfort for the prospective customer's family in case of death to an argument based on the desirability of insurance as a plan of systematic saving. Such differences in individuals the salesman must be constantly alert to detect as soon as they manifest themselves during the selling process.

The salesman who understands the normal behavior has won half the battle, for he knows what to expect of the man who represents the average in that trait. In selling through the medium of advertising, the salesman must rely almost wholly upon appeals made for the average customer, for he cannot easily change his line of argument nor has he the advantage of personal contact in estimating differences in individuals. By the process of selection the personal salesman is often able to discover a particular interest of a prospective customer that provides an opening for a special argument or suggestion. He thus has discovered an abnormal interest which represents a decided departure from the average. These differences in individuals are due to many factors such as heredity, race, sex, environment, and education.

Group and Individual Buying Motives.—Buying motives are found in one of the other of two classes: the first, social

or racial, and easily defined; the second, individual and varying according to circumstances.

For example, all farmers are interested in bettering their condition and are receptive to the suggestions of a salesman of agricultural implements. Yet while the farmers as a class are interested, many individuals will refuse to buy for reasons that concern them particularly and privately. Robbins the farmer is interested in a new brand of cultivator, but he refuses to have anything to do with its representative, Pusher, because of a dislike for him arising out of previous unsatisfactory transactions.

The Complexity of Most Buying Motives.—The motives for buying are many and varied. Occasionally a purchase is made to satisfy some primary emotion or instinct, such as fear, rage, love, self-protection, imitation, hoarding, and the like; or again, pure reason, entirely free from significant emotional influence, may govern the purchase. Psychologists have found the task of analyzing and classifying motives extremely difficult; first of all it is by no means certain where the line can surely be drawn between instincts and emotions; and in the second place there is even more difficulty in determining which are the primary and which the secondary, which the simple and which the complex. Fortunately these delicate points are of decidedly minor importance to the student of salesmanship. For him the questions are: "What motives shall I encounter? Which of them are especially desirable? And how are they to be appealed to?"

Accordingly, we concern ourselves with this practical aspect of the problem of the working of the human mind. Whether instinct, emotion, or reason are at work together or separately in any given instance is not of much interest to us. We are concerned with the impulses or motives themselves as they appear in influencing a customer to make a purchase. Such

psychological comments as appear from time to time hereafter, then, are not made with rigid adherence to the terminology and nomenclature of the science of psychology but rather as a means toward facilitating the study and comprehension of the problems of actual sales conditions.

The Immediate Buying Motive.—For example, if a retail grocer buys a large order of tea of a well-advertised brand, his obvious motive is the desire for gain—he wishes to sell that tea at a profit. But behind this motive may be, and indeed are, other reasons of which the salesman can hardly be expected to be aware. The grocer may be eager to make a larger profit than usual in order to be able to buy a radio set for his children, or to take a more extended vacation, or to offset a recent loss, or to prevent a competitor from getting an advantage. And any one of these reasons is the product of a combination of instinctive and emotional tendencies. For the salesman to endeavor to analyze or trace a motive to its diverse instinctive sources would be arduous and unnecessary. He must recognize and understand the *main motive for buying* in a case, must likewise determine what *other buying motives* can be put into operation in that particular case, and must be able to deal effectively with these motives. To do so it is well he should have a general conception of the fundamental principles of human behavior in the first place, but it is still more necessary that he study the special elements that lead to buying and are here called "buying motives."

Behind every purchase there are two conflicting motives: an instinctive desire to possess the article proffered if it gives pleasure, renders a profit, or serves some useful purpose; and an instinctive reluctance to make the purchase because it involves drawing upon one's reservoir of power, symbolized in money. The more limited this reservoir of power the more cautious we are in drawing upon it. If by nature we are

extremely cautious then we "just hate spending." If we have the means to spend and refuse to do so we may be described as "stingy" or "mean."

Money is the token we exchange for necessities, comforts, luxury, leisure, and the labor and services of others. The art of the salesman is to convince the buyer by means of objective demonstration or reasoned argument or both, that the offer returns full value in comfort, luxury, or utility for the expenditure involved. He creates in the mind of the buyer a vivid mental picture of the benefits to be derived from the purchase in order to overcome that instinctive reluctance to draw on his reservoir of power which everyone experiences when faced with a purchase of any moment.

Thus the motive behind every purchase is the satisfaction of one or more instinctive desires—desires so powerful as to overcome all opposing desires. A merchant buys goods for resale to satisfy the money-making instinct; an automobile is bought because it gives pleasure by satisfying the instinctive desire for play or luxury and comfort, or because it appeals to the pride of possession, or perhaps because all three instincts enter into the transaction.

The Salesman's Appeal to Motive.—The aim of the salesman is to present not only the advantages or attractiveness of his goods in a convincing manner but to arouse in the mind of the buyer as many motives as possible for making the purchase. When a particular motive is more open to appeal than any other he will, of course, lay increased stress upon that.

From the many arguments in favor of his goods, which shall the salesman select? If he is selling an automobile, shall he base his appeal on the fact that the prospect will derive great pleasure from motoring? Or shall he lay stress on the fact that the car is economical to operate or that by its use the prospect will be able to conserve his time? Again let us assume

that the commodity is a suite of expensive mahogany office furniture. Will it be well to emphasize the pride to be derived from its possession, or will it be preferable to argue that the elaborate furniture will reflect the owner's prosperity and sound business standing to his customers and consequently pay for itself in the profits derived from prestige? The salesman must consider these questions in the preparation of his sales argument; his analysis of the advantages of his proposition from every viewpoint requires him to work out the effective treatment of every buying motive.

An Example of Appeal to Different Motives.—A salesman trying to sell an automobile to a young married man interested him to the extent of making an appointment for a trial trip in a car similar to the one under consideration. During the ride the customer asked several questions as to the reliability of the car, the chance of its getting out of order, and the cost of its upkeep. The salesman based his argument especially on an appeal to caution by explaining in how many ways every component part of the car was tested before the complete machine was assembled and sent out on the road, and how easily and inexpensively repairs and replacements could be made should these prove necessary. The prospect seemed to be almost sold.

A few days later the salesman heard that the young man had practically decided to buy a competing car. This car while fully equal to his own in mechanical perfection was inferior to it in the beauty of its design and the style of its finish.

Instead of interviewing the prospect at his place of business, the salesman called upon him during the evening at his home and interviewed him in the presence of his wife. Drawing her into the conversation he appealed to her motive of pride by accentuating the stylish appearance of his car as compared

with that of his competitor. He gave also the names of two recent purchasers in the town whose wives were prominent figures in the social life of the community. His change of appeal from mechanical perfection (as a means of satisfying caution, and desire for knowledge) to appearance (or a means of satisfying the motive of pride) proved effective in closing the sale.

The Instinctive Basis of Every Sale.—An article may possess obvious advantages or points of superiority over competing goods; but a sale does not necessarily follow when these are drawn to the attention of the buyer. A customer does not buy oranges merely because he knows they are sweeter than lemons. An appeal must frequently be made to the motives which influence the buyer apart from the merely comparative merits of the goods, before the final decision to buy is reached. The merits of the goods are rarely sufficient in themselves to rouse the buying motive, and the argument is strengthened in proportion as it appeals to any of these instincts or emotions or higher mental processes that, combined, provide the buying motive.

These motives vary with the kind of goods bought, the character of the buyer, and the conditions under which the buyer and seller meet. For the purpose of salesmanship, the leading motives must be analyzed and reduced to a working basis; upon one or more of these the sales argument can always be based.

Friendliness.—The first appeal that the salesman should make is to the buyer's natural tendency to be friendly. Friendliness, is in itself no reason for buying; yet when a prospective customer feels friendly toward a salesman he is inclined to look for reasons for buying, while if he is unfriendly he looks for reasons for refusing to buy. The salesman who

approaches the customer with a smile and gives thorough evidence of the desire to be friendly is far better off than a gloomy or austere salesman; the first wins some degree of favorable consideration, the second repels it.

The Desire for Gain.—One of the strongest of all buying motives is the desire for gain. We are willing to spend money in order to make money. The power of the desire for gain rests upon the significantly vital instincts of possession, rivalry, imitation, and ambition, and sometimes that of play as well. Therefore this is the most dominant of all commercial instincts and its satisfaction is the main motive which actuates business.

Offering goods for resale is one of the most important branches of salesmanship. When such a sale is made it is advisable to show what will be gained thereby. The gain may be direct, as in the case of the merchant buying merchandise to be sold at an advanced price; or it may be indirect, as when a merchant is induced to invest money in goods that, although bringing slight profit, will attract trade to his store. The strongest form of this appeal is present when goods are offered at a reduced price. The bargain has an attraction all its own and will often secure attention when every other method of appeal has failed.

Whenever a sale is made for business as distinguished from personal use, the appeal to the desire for gain comes first in importance and is the primary motive on which the argument should be based.

The Desire to Excel.—A natural and legitimate pride in achievement arouses in all the desire to excel. Ambition, rivalry, imitation, play, and other instinctive tendencies are here present. In those of strong character this motive reveals itself as ambition; in weaker mortals it degenerates into vanity.

Ambition prompts us in the struggle to amass wealth, to win promotion, to gain power, to acquire learning. This instinct may reveal itself in any of a hundred different ways. However revealed, it is a motive to which an appeal can be made either directly or indirectly in the construction of almost every sales argument.

A rare painting valued at $100,000 came for sale to the gallery of a famous art dealer whose judgment was as reliable as his word. He promptly invited a wealthy patron who was at that time forming a collection, to inspect the painting. The picture did not at all attract the customer and no emphasis on beauty of line, tone, or color aroused interest. The assurance of the dealer that the painting was well worth the price asked proved of no avail and the sale seemed lost until the dealer told his client something of the reputation of the artist. He dwelt upon the latter's high reputation and showed that other works by him were housed in the illustrious homes of European nobility.

The appeal to artistic appreciation and to confidence in the dealer's judgment failed; the appeal to the prestige of possession and the desire to excel, by possessing something finer than other people, resulted in a sale.

A salesman offering an educational course aroused sufficient interest in the subject of education to gain the ear of his prospect, but the young man's interest proved lukewarm and passive. The problem was to turn this apathetic interest in knowledge into an active desire to obtain it by an appeal to latent ambition. The salesman knew that one or two friends of the young man were studying business courses in order to prepare themselves for bigger things. He therefore pictured the results of their efforts and contrasted their future progress and influence with the probable mediocrity of his unambitious listener. The appeal to the desire to excel, i.e., to the instinct of rivalry, was strong enough to effect the sale.

The Appeal to Caution.—Caution is the primary motive to which an appeal should be made in the sale of anything which guards against loss, injury, or danger. It arises from such instinctive and emotional states as fear, family affection, hoarding, and occasionally some others, such as ambition or rivalry. Caution is the mainspring in the purchase of all forms of insurance. The father of a family wishes to protect his wife and children against want in the event of his death; the owner of a house takes out insurance to protect himself against loss by fire; the business man buys bonds in prosperous times to provide against financial difficulties in hard times. This desire for safety may in some cases be a stronger motive of appeal than the desire for gain. A cautious business man seeking an investment would be inclined to buy government bonds or investments, even though yielding a low rate of return, because they would assure him of the security of his money.

This instinct may sometimes be effectively appealed to with goods which are not intended directly to satisfy it. To illustrate, a salesman called at a dry goods store and offered an exclusive agency for a certain brand of hosiery. The buyer recognized the merits of the line and the desirability of the agency, but his caution made him procrastinate. To the stereotyped answer: "I don't want to do anything about it now, but I may a little later," the salesman replied:

"We shall be very glad to have you handle our agency a little later, Mr. Jones, if it is still open. In the meantime you can have no objection to my offering the proposition to the People's Store."

The suggestion that an opportunity of securing a possible and highly probable advantage over him might be offered to the merchant's competitor, sufficed to close the sale.

In another instance a business man about to take a trip across the continent was approached by a representative of one of the transcontinental railroads. There seemed no particular

reason why the business man should travel over the agent's road. In conversation the agent learned that the prospective passenger always carried accident insurance when traveling. This indicated that the instinct of caution was strongly developed. The agent therefore laid great stress on the fact that his road had not met with a serious passenger train accident for years. This sufficed to secure an order for tickets.

For one business man who is willing to take chances and throw caution to the winds there are a dozen who prefer the safe course. Every selling argument should include when possible an appeal to the innate cautiousness of human nature.

Desire for Knowledge.—All civilized progress is due to the desire for knowledge. This motive probably arises from such instinctive tendencies as curiosity, self-protection or fear, and ambition. Lacking this motive, knowledge would have been gained solely by experience and nothing would have been developed by scientific experiment and study based on knowledge formerly acquired and preserved. To it we owe printing and the widespread sale of books. It prompts us in the acquisition of miscellaneous information for its own sake apart from any use to which the information may be put. It is a compelling influence of much value to the salesman and the advertiser in its elemental form of simple curiosity.

As illustrations of the potency of the appeal to this motive in suitable cases, consider the methods of the salesman selling educational works such as dictionaries, encyclopedias, travelogues, works of history, and so on. He bases his argument on the supposition that his prospective customers are thirsting for the information contained in his books. When he has first aroused their curiosity, he proves to their satisfaction that this thirst will be assuaged by quoting interesting extracts from the work, choosing those which tend to rouse the desire for further knowledge.

Frequently the appeal to curiosity is of value in gaining an interview and in arousing the interest of an indifferent buyer. Many salesmen refuse to reveal their identity or the nature of their business at the start. The interview is opened with a suggestion carefully designed to awaken a desire for more information about the subject.

The Appeal to Imitation.—We often do things because others do them. We are naturally imitative from birth. The child first learns to speak in this way. The inherent tendency to imitate others explains the vogue of fashion and style. Manifestly this instinct can be readily appealed to in the phrasing of the sales arguments.

The wealthy art patron already mentioned was finally induced to buy the rare painting by his desire to excel; but imitation—wanting to do what others whom he admired or envied were doing—primarily led to the formation of an art collection and thus to the purchase in question.

One man establishes a certain type of home in a particular place because several of his friends have done so. He likes to live in the same general manner as well as in the company of his acquaintances; among his motives are imitation and the desire for the association and also the approval of his fellows as well as the instinct for possession. A cautious person decides on the purchase of a particular kind of automobile because he knows that many others have bought it, a fact that inspires confidence in the merits of the machine. Here caution and the desire to follow the lead of others are equally blended. A perfume named after a popular singer may find a ready sale because it is presumed that the singer uses and indorses the scent and an appeal is thus made to the imitative instinct. The salesman who is seeking to advertise his goods in a dealer's window frequently obtains free window displays by appealing to this motive. If all arguments in favor of putting in the dis-

play fail to win permission, then as a final resource the dealer is shown photographs of other prominent stores which have made profitable use of the displays. Here rivalry and ambition blend with imitation.

The majority of women imitate the mode of living or the dress or the actions of those in a slightly higher social sphere. The retail salesman frequently finds it advantageous to remember this in his appeal. If he is selling an article of wear or for toilet use, for example, he mentions when possible the fact that Mrs. Blank, the wife of the bank president, or some other local celebrity, uses the same thing.

A customer in a hardware store was hesitating between the purchase of a $2 and a $3 saw. The salesman thereupon remarked that Mr. Wilkins had been in yesterday and bought one of the $3 tools. Mr. Wilkins was well known to the customer, who probably relied upon his friend's judgment, thus satisfying caution as well as imitation. The more expensive article was promptly bought.

The appeal to imitation can be most effectively made either at the opening of an interview or at its close when the buyer reveals indecision. To mention the name of a customer who has just bought and who is known to the prospective purchaser is as a rule an effective means of winning the ear of an indifferent or reluctant prospect. Similar tactics at the close of the argument will frequently transform an undecided prospect into a satisfied purchaser.

The Appeal to Affection.—An appeal to this emotion has a comparatively limited scope since love of family or even of friends is usually not vitally or even moderately active in business affairs. In the sale of certain articles, however, the affections cannot be ignored as a means of strengthening the argument. The prompting of this instinct induces the purchase of something for those we love. An obvious example

is a mother, who when passing through a store is easily tempted to take home an article of finery or a toy for her child if an aptly phrased show card suggests the purchase by an appeal to affection.

An effective appeal can be made to this motive in another way. The influence of a friend, a wife, or a mother, is oftentimes so strong that it dominates the actions of those they love. Where the salesman can add such an influence in favor of his offer to his other arguments, his appeal will be proportionately strengthened.

When any representative of a well-known correspondence school visits the home of a prospect he tries to arrange for the wife or parent to be present at the interview. His selling problem is to arouse the ambition of the purchaser to the point of sacrificing the time and money needed to buy and study a correspondence course of instruction. The advice and urging of a wife or parent often impel the prospect to enroll when the arguments of the salesman have failed. Here the motive may be more or less mixed and love of praise and ambition be as determining factors as the appeal to affection. Many people are impelled to a course of action if it is expected to result in some benefit to those they love, though they remain obdurate if the benefit to be derived is for themselves alone.

Love of Admiration.—The love of praise and admiration is inherent in human nature. In its natural form it is revealed as a blend of the desire for affection and the approval of one's fellows with ambition and a healthy rivalry or desire to excel. In its exaggerated form it degenerates into vanity and boastfulness. The powerful appeal of extreme fashion is based on vanity.

A business man about to refurnish his office had decided to buy a plain, inexpensive oak suite. This would have served his purpose admirably; but when the salesman vividly pictured the

dignity of a handsome set of mahogany furniture and the admiration such a suite would receive from his friends and his customers, the business man was willing to pay double the price he had first allotted to the equipment.

Many a customer buys a more elaborately equipped automobile than he at first intends when he contemplates the impression such a car will make upon his friends. The encyclopedia salesman appeals to this instinct when he points out the impressive effect and the gratification afforded by the presence of such a handsome and scholarly set of books in the home bookcase.

Many members of colleges, gymnasium classes, welfare clubs, and similar organizations, are partly moved by this desire for the respect of others.

The Pleasure of Possession.—It is obvious that the more vividly the salesman can picture the pleasure to be derived from the possession of anything, the stronger the selling argument becomes. This pleasure may range from the quiet satisfaction of possessing such a thing as an enduring and perfect tool to the youthful ecstasy of owning an elaborate and much longed-for toy. The pleasure of possession can be most frequently appealed to when selling to the final consumer and is a form of sales argument most readily applicable to selling in a retail store.

Comfort.—The impulse to be comfortable is one of the strongest today. Any offering that serves to add to the ease of living has a strong sales argument. There are comparatively few commodities that do not offer opportunity for the use of this appeal, either directly or indirectly. Coal, tea, furniture, insurance, shoes, bonds, books, electric appliances, pictures—all these and a myriad more provide the salesman with a basis for this appeal.

Play.—The instinct toward play is one of the simple, fundamental tendencies in many creatures, including man; its basis seems to be the natural practice or exercise of muscles or of mind. Baseball and chess, snow-shoeing and riddles, attract thousands of people who spend large amounts of time and money on these forms of play. The appeal to this instinct cannot be used in every sale, perhaps; yet though the offering itself provides no basis for the appeal, the salesman may frequently use the play instinct in order to secure favorable attention, for friendliness is often induced by a joke or some similarly playful means.

Appeal to as Many Instincts as Possible.—The failure of a strong appeal to the most powerful buying motive does not necessarily mean that the sale cannot be made. A merchant may be convinced that an article offered will return a handsome profit and be well worth handling. But if he is already overstocked or if he is short of capital he may reject the offer for the time being and concentrate his efforts on the disposal of the goods on hand. In such a case the salesman can still pave the way for a future sale.

An automobile salesman may have pictured the pleasure to be derived from the possession of a motor car, he may have convinced the prospect that his machine is as mechanically perfect as such a piece of mechanism can be, and that the cost of maintenance and operation is reduced to the lowest possible limit; but the appeal to pleasure, caution, and economy may fail if for reasons best known to himself the prospective purchaser has decided to deny himself the gratification of owning an automobile. In such a case the enterprising salesman seeks other arguments and modes of appeal in order to break down opposition. Success frequently depends upon resource in arousing other buying motives when the obvious arguments have failed.

The resourceful automobile salesman already mentioned had vainly tried to sell a luxurious high-powered car to a wealthy customer who two or three years before had bought a comparatively inexpensive runabout. The prospect acknowledged that the high-powered car was all that was claimed, yet he remained obdurate despite the salesman's varied and eloquent arguments.

After half a dozen fruitless interviews the salesman determined to appeal to an instinct which he had so far neglected. He drove the car in question to the home of the prospect while the latter was away on business. He then invited the two daughters of the house to take a trial trip in the car, explaining that if they would add the influence of their opinions and convictions of the car's merits to his sales argument their father would probably purchase it. A trial ride followed by an evening's family discussion brought a prompt purchase.

Here the salesman based his final appeal on affection. This proved the final influence that turned the scale.

The vast majority of sales result from the culminating effect of a series of appeals to a variety of motives, for one motive alone is seldom powerful enough to produce action.

Which Instincts to Appeal to.—The aim of the salesman is obviously to base his appeal on those instincts which are presumed to exert the strongest influence over the prospective buyer. In selling to a retail merchant it is apparent that his principal motive for buying is the satisfaction of the desire for profit. In selling a radio set to a person who does not yet own one but who can well afford the price, the dominating instinct will be pleasure. In selling a new car to somebody who already owns one the chief motive of appeal may be pride. But, as has been shown, the motive which most influences the sale may not always be the apparent one. In selling life insurance the satisfaction of caution and affection would seem

to be the principal form of appeal; yet with some people a stronger motive may be a desire for gain. The fact that immediately on taking out a $5,000 policy they have added $5,000 to their estate may appeal to their instinct for saving.

In the construction of his various sales arguments the salesman should aim to present his offer in a variety of ways so as to appeal to as many motives as possible. Then in the presence of a prospect he can readily ascertain the most potent buying motive by feeling his ground; or, as has been said, the appeal may be made to several motives in an endeavor to ascertain the dominant one, thus making the combined appeal strong enough to effect the sale.

An Appeal May Prevent Sale.—In attempting to rouse the buying motive the salesman may appeal to instincts or emotions that are not pleasing to the prospect. For instance, if a salesman appeals to the play instinct by becoming jocular with a dignified, reserved prospect, he will repel rather than attract.

Every reason for buying may also be a reason for not buying, depending on the customer's general characteristics and condition of mind at the time of the interview.

The salesman, therefore, must possess a fine discernment of the customer's inclinations and choose from the range of buying motives just those which he believes the prospect will desire to satisfy.

CHAPTER III

THE CUSTOMER'S MENTAL JOURNEY

The Mental Stages.—The discussion in the preceding chapter leads to the formulation of an elemental principle in salesmanship: To effect a sale the mind of the buyer must be led from its mood at the beginning of the interview to the stage of buying. In other words, the salesman acts upon the customer's mind, stirs and stimulates buying motives, converts him from a passive to an actively receptive attitude.

The prospective customer may be in any conceivable frame of mind. His mood may be good-natured and friendly or irritable and discourteous. He may be already interested in the offer, or indifferent, or even antagonistic.

Whatever his attitude of mind, the salesman must by means of personality and through arguments in favor of his goods, cause the prospect's mind to pass through certain mental states —to take a mental journey as it were—progressing along the route of Attention——Interest——Desire——Action.

This mental journey should hardly be likened to a railroad trip from Attention to Action with Interest and Desire as stopping places en route; it is far more comparable to a boat trip down a river, passing from one type of scenery into and through others; because attention shades into interest and desire is transformed into action before one realizes where the first stage ends and the second begins. No sale can be made until attention is first given to the proposition, until interest is awakened, desire for the commodity aroused, and action finally secured. In sales outside the retail field, the buyer

knows little or nothing about the offer and accordingly he is inclined to be indifferent or else on the defensive. He must in consequence be taken on this mental journey before he is transformed from a prospect into a customer.

The Mental States in a Retail Sale.—Even when a simple retail purchase is made, the customer's mind passes through these mental stages. Before the housewife decides to buy something for the breakfast table, her attention is drawn to the matter by the demands of the appetite; interest is aroused to satisfy this demand in the most satisfactory way that her means permit; she desires to purchase certain things; action promptly follows. These stages may be reached almost simultaneously when the purchase is a daily need or a trivial matter which needs little consideration. But as the importance of the purchase or the service increases and its price rises, more thought is devoted to the expenditure; and this line of thought then becomes more clearly a passage through the four stages already enumerated.

Carrying the analysis a degree further we shall in this chapter consider each of these mental states in some slight detail. Not until further ground is covered can suggestions be given as to how the sales arguments are to be constructed so as to carry the mind of a reluctant prospect from apathetic indifference or even antagonism to a sale.

Attention.—There are many ways of attracting attention, some of them uncommon and even bizarre, but it is no part of salesmanship to adopt unusual methods merely for the sake of attracting attention. Moreover such methods usually fail in their effect because of their crudity or inappropriateness. When a prospective customer is first approached the aim should simply be to turn him from his indifferent or antagonistic attitude into the noncommittal one of at least being willing to

listen to the proposition. This transformation may be effected by means of the opening sentence or merely by the approach of the salesman himself. If he is so fortunate as to be equipped with a particularly pleasing personality and comes forward with a smile that disarms suspicion because of its frank sincerity, he may at once secure the kind of attention he is seeking. Not all salesmen, however, are equipped in this happy way. So assuming merely that there is nothing unpleasing in voice, bearing, or address to create a feeling of antagonism in the customer's mind, everything depends upon the effect made by the opening sentence

The cash register salesman, for instance, when he first introduces himself to a customer does not open with a commonplace introduction such as, "I represent So-and-So," or "I have called to sell you a register," or "I should like to talk to you about our registers"; he puts it, rather, in this way, "I want to interest you in our new methods for taking care of transactions with customers in your store." The storekeeper is not interested in a register as a register, nor in the firm that sells them. But he is interested in recording transactions which take place in his store.

Having thus secured attention and to some extent interest, the salesman proceeds to transform this interest into desire by explaining in how many ways a cash register will enable better care to be taken of the store's transactions—information which has been obtained by a previous diagnosis of the dealer's needs.

Securing Attention by Mail.—Attention to the offer is sometimes secured in other ways. Frequently the customer is advised in advance of the salesman's call, either by means of a personal letter which outlines the nature of the offer, or by means of circulars, booklets, or other advertising literature. The aim in each case is to draw attention to the advantages

of the thing advertised with the hope that when a salesman calls he will be given an interview.

This method is often adopted in selling a specialty. Frequently the customer is "circularized" several times with literature specially written to arouse attention and interest. Thus the ground is prepared so that when a representative calls the customer is sufficiently interested in the proposition to desire further information and will consequently grant attention at once.

Interest.—Attention is gradually transformed into interest in measure as the buyer's willingness to listen is changed into an active wishing for information. In nine cases out of ten the stage of interest is reached when an acknowledgment of the merits of the offer can be drawn from the general type of buyer by means of adroit inquiries and he himself begins to ask questions; or when the taciturn, capricious, or critical type of customer begins to detect flaws and disadvantages in the offer. In this way the latter reveals his interest in learning more about it. He may even go so far as to acknowledge that he is willing to consider the proposition. When this stage of interest is reached the salesman can begin to appeal to the particular buying motive which the nature of the offer and the temperament of the buyer may indicate. By this means interest which is more or less impersonal is transformed into a strong desire for personal ownership.

Desire.—As attention shades into interest so desire shades into action or a definite promise to buy. A faint tinge of interest is gradually deepened into definite desire. This can be done, as will be more fully explained later, by imbuing the customer with the salesman's own enthusiasm. Unless the salesman is enthusiastic about the merits of his goods and the advantages to be derived from their possession, he has little

chance of rousing the buying motive. To effect a sale, desire must be made so strong that the benefits to be derived from the offer loom larger in the mind than the money which must be paid out. Until the salesman is sure that the desire to possess is so strong that price is no longer the chief consideration, he should not attempt to impel the prospect along his mental journey to the final stage of action—a positive decision to buy and to buy *now*.

Action.—A prospective customer may desire to take advantage of an offer because it represents good value in every way, but this does not necessarily imply that a sale will follow. It is human nature to vacillate before purchasing, and this vacillation grows in proportion to the ratio of the expenditure to the customer's total income. The more momentous the purchase the greater becomes the fear, either definite or intangible, that possibly a mistake is being made or that better value for the same money may be found elsewhere. In consequence, caution impels the prospective purchaser to take plenty of time before coming to a final decision.

This inability to make up one's mind often appears when even a trifling purchase is to be made. How much more, therefore, is it to be expected when the purchase represents an investment of any importance. If the buyer is unable of his own accord to come to a definite decision, he tries as a rule to postpone action until a later date or until the salesman calls again. The salesman must be able to ascertain the reason for this indecision and also must be equipped with arguments which will help the customer to make up his mind.

The Salesman as a Guide.—The construction of the sales talk must be based on the mental journey which the customer takes under the salesman's guidance. The customer is so prone to be indifferent or opposed to the journey that his guide must

possess special skill in directing the course, now leading, now driving, now blocking a byway of escape, now letting the customer ride on the current, and again bending to the oar and speeding him on his course. Knowledge of customers of all kinds, knowledge of his goods and their field, skill in demonstration, and skill in handling human nature are a large part of his equipment. Particularly should the salesman realize that, in a general way, Attention is given to *him,* Interest is favorable attention given to his *offering,* Desire is a specific wish to *profit* by the offering, while Action is *executed desire.*

CHAPTER IV

ATTITUDES OF BUYER AND SALESMAN

The Classification of Buyers.—We have seen that in the construction of the sales argument the object is not only to describe the goods or offer, but also to appeal to and rouse as many buying motives as are permitted by the nature of the goods and the services they render. From this it follows that the form which an argument or appeal may take must be varied to suit first the needs and next the temperament of the individual customer.

All customers fall into one of three classes: wholesale, specialty, or retail. Each class has a different general mental attitude toward the salesman and this attitude is again modified by the individual's temperament. In this chapter we consider the needs of the different classes, leaving for later discussion the modifications which the salesman will make in the presentation of his arguments in order to appeal to the temperament of the individual with whom he is dealing.

The Wholesale Buyer.—Wholesale buyers may be retail merchants or department managers, or wholesalers—commonly called "jobbers." Their purpose in buying is to sell again at a profit. Therefore they are more or less professional appraisers of values. It is their business to scrutinize every offer of goods with a view to selecting those which from the viewpoint of profit and prestige will seem most attractive to the customers to whom they must resell the goods. They are interested in the most attractive styles or the most durable

qualities or both—solely from the viewpoint of the profit that can be made from resale.

The retail merchant, in addition to the goods required for his regular trade, is always on the lookout for articles which will especially please the customers to whom he caters and thus enable him to sell more goods and make more profit.

There is then, on the part of all buyers at wholesale an attitude of interest in any offer which they consider may be profitable for them to accept. The wholesaler is interested in any improvement in methods of manufacture; new patterns, styles, designs, are items of news that he is glad to hear about. So also the retailer desires to be shown new products or new lines which offer him a better value or greater profit than those he already handles.

The Problem of the Wholesale Buyer.—Because buyers at wholesale are professional buyers and are always in the market for commodities, much of their time is taken up in inspecting salesmen's samples. A score or more of representatives may call upon a buyer every week, depending upon the size of the firm and the frequency of its purchases.

A large drug store, for example, carries thousands of different items. Salesmen from many wholesale and manufacturing houses call upon the store's buyer hoping to secure his business in lines which he is already handling and which are bought from other concerns. Other salesmen call upon him with new lines and try to induce him to place them in stock and so add to his already large variety. Each salesman offers reasons, more or less good, why the druggist should either add the new line to his stock or let it replace a line he already sells.

Thus from a great variety of offerings the wholesale buyer must select a few and reject many. While he is always interested in inspecting goods, the pressure brought to bear upon him by the number of salesmen soliciting his business is such

that he cannot afford to give much time to each salesman. If he did he could do little else, whereas his duties consist of far more than listening to salesmen's arguments.

The Attitude of the Wholesale Buyer.—For this reason the wholesale buyer is usually reserved, cold, and slow to respond to the efforts of the salesman with whom he has not yet done business. His time is so largely taken up by the inspection of offerings which have no interest for him that he is chary of giving encouragement until he is assured that the goods are something he *may* want. True, the salesman may be offering commodities which the buyer's firm sells and they may be of good value; but the wholesaler may already be buying similar goods from some other house. Unless he is offered a lower price or some other obvious inducement, there is no particular reason why he should favor the unknown salesman in preference to his existing connections. He therefore resists any efforts to convince him of the advantages of changing his connections.

Wholesale buyers want to find out at the beginning of the interview what the salesman has to offer—"what his proposition is"—and to decide immediately whether it is worth investigating. In the majority of cases they are actively on the defensive. They look for objections to the goods offered and for reasons why they should not buy. They know that plenty of arguments in favor of buying will be provided by the salesman.

The Salesman's Attitude Toward Wholesale Buyers.—Thus in his approach to wholesale buyers the salesman will find little encouragement in their general attitude. They will be mildly skeptical, cautious in revealing interest, and prepared to guard themselves against encouraging the salesman, however attractive the offer may appear. Unless they decide early

in the interview that the proposition is of interest to them, they will immediately try to dismiss the salesman. The readiness with which an interview will be granted at all will depend upon the demands made upon the buyer's time and the prestige of the firm represented by the salesman. When the salesman finally comes face to face with his customer his attitude will vary widely. In the presence of a busy wholesale buyer or the buyer for a department in a large store every effort must be concentrated on proving at the start that the salesman's line is well worth the buyer's inspection. In the presence of the small retailer or a buyer whose business is largely covered by the salesman's line, the salesman can go to work in a more leisurely manner. Whatever the method adopted a point to bear in mind always is that the wholesale buyer is not governed in his purchase by the styles and qualities which manufacturers produce for the country at large; he is influenced wholly by his personal judgment as to the wants of his own customers.

The Buyer's Particular Trade Must be Considered.—The appeal to the motive of profit is strengthened in the degree that the salesman is able to select from his stock one or more samples that will appeal strongly to the class of trade to which the buyer caters. To do this, entails careful study of the buyer's needs, of the existing stock carried, and of the goods and methods of competitors. Equipped with this information the salesman can safely be insistent that certain goods be given a trial without any fear of antagonizing the buyer. When addressing an unknown prospect the most that a salesman can hope for in nine cases out of ten is to insert a wedge with one line of goods or a modest trial order of his whole line. Subsequent orders then depend largely on the fate of the first order as exemplified in turnover and profit therefrom.

The salesman should be more insistent both upon an interview and a trial order when selling goods with a seasonal

appeal or a limited turnover than when selling staples in every-day demand. The reason is plain. Only from two to four calls a year will be necessary for goods with a seasonal appeal, whereas orders for staples will need to be taken just as frequently as these are consumed. The fact that the salesman cannot call again for two or three months makes the visit of greater importance than a weekly or monthly call and justifies him in exercising more aggressiveness and insistence.

For example, the grocery salesman representing a jobber and calling upon his prospects every week may, without neglecting to present the merits of his goods if opportunity offers, be well advised to bend his first efforts toward winning the buyer's good-will. His frequent calls should in time make him well acquainted with his prospects, and through the mutual friendliness thus established he may in time secure an order. The wholesale hat salesman who sees his prospects only three or four times a year cannot afford to devote a number of visits to building up good-will, the importance of which increases with the frequency of meetings between salesman and buyer He must concentrate on securing the buyer's immediate attention for the offer itself.

The Specialty Buyer.—Specialty buying consists in buying for consumption and from a salesman who calls upon the buyer; it resembles a retail sale in the first respect—the purchase for use—and the majority of wholesale sales in the second—the salesman's visit. Specialty buyers may be divided into two classes: (1) those who are always in the market for the commodity offered; (2) those who seldom need the commodity offered—or to whom it is new. For convenience we will designate these as class A and class B, respectively.

Class A embraces buyers of raw materials which are used in the manufacture of goods, or of office and of factory supplies which must continually be replenished.

In class B we group all buyers of articles which, from their nature and the use to which they are to be put, do not involve an early repeat order—exemplified in such articles as pianos, books, office devices, machinery, and so on.

Class A. The attitude of buyers belonging to this class is similar to that of wholesale buyers. They are offered something they are constantly buying. While the purpose for which the goods are bought differs—i.e., wholesale buyers buy goods for resale, the specialty buyers for consumption—the same desire exists to inspect new goods which may be better for the purpose in view or which may be more economical in use. The user of lubricating oil, for example, is interested in any oil which will prove more economical in keeping his machinery in good running order; the furniture manufacturer is glad to know of a quality of paint or varnish which will improve the appearance of his furniture or save time or money in operation. A new paper which can be used with increased ease, popularity, or economy attracts the publisher or printer. In short, the attitude of these buyers is one of general interest in the class of goods which they use.

Specialty buyers like wholesale buyers are also visited by salesmen representing many different firms, each seeking business. Experience has taught them that among the many offers they receive few are worth investigation; so, like wholesale buyers, they are reserved, cautious, on the defensive, and not inclined to give encouragement until they are sure of their ground for they know that a salesman who has been encouraged is difficult to dismiss.

Class B. Buyers belonging to this class as a rule have no previous interest in the article offered. The salesman offering a set of books, a new office appliance, an insurance policy, finds a wall of indifference facing him. His prospects as a rule have felt no need for his goods and are getting along well enough without them. There is neither general interest in

the article nor curiosity to inspect it. The business man approached by the insurance salesman or the book agent is apt to be even antagonistic. Until he begins to realize something of the benefits of insurance his inclination is to say abruptly to the salesman, "No thank you, I am not interested." The salesman's first task is to break down this indifference, which in some cases amounts to a genuine, if latent, opposition.

The Salesman's Attitude Toward Specialty Buyers, Class A.—There is no royal road to the favor of the specialty buyer. Persistence and tact are necessary in winning an interview and permission to explain the merits of one's goods. The salesman will, of course, try to make a sale on his first visit; but even if he does not succeed, he must visit the buyer on each trip. After he has called a number of times he will probably succeed in establishing that feeling of friendliness which is a useful preliminary to a sale.

Like the wholesale salesman who calls infrequently, the specialty salesman is justified in being insistent, not to say aggressive, because his visit then assumes a certain importance in the buyer's eyes. He may make his long trip an excuse for persisting in the attempt to obtain an immediate interview. When he has gained the interview he is justified in asking for an immediate decision for or against his offer. On both sides it is recognized that as he calls only once in several months his visit is relatively more important than that of the man who can drop in every week or two. Such a visit deserves greater consideration on the part of the buyer and calls for more energy on the part of the salesman.

The Salesman's Attitude Toward Specialty Buyers, Class B.—The specialty salesman catering to this class has even more inertia to overcome. He knows that the buyer has no general interest in the product predisposing him to in-

vestigate the salesman's claims. Selling to the specialty buyer who is ignorant of his offer requires courage and perseverance in a high degree. The salesman must not accept "No" too easily. His manner must be sincere and enthusiastically earnest. He must be primed with arguments to appeal to many varied motives and temperaments. He must use every energy in gaining the buyer's interest at the opening of the interview and his enthusiasm must be great enough to secure and hold attention while arguing in favor of his goods.

The Retail Buyer.—In retail sales the purchase is made for consumption, as in specialty sales, but the customer in this case visits the salesman. Since he is already in the buying mood, the task of the retail salesman is markedly different from that of the wholesale or specialty salesman. This divergence is so fundamental that it requires special consideration and is accordingly dealt with separately in a later chapter.

Summary of the General Attitude of the Salesman.—In all three cases one paramount rule holds true; for inasmuch as the salesman has to take the customer over one or more stages of the mental journey to the act of buying, the salesman must always ascertain first and foremost the prospect's attitude toward buying his offering. This state or stage determined, the next step is that of starting the prospect on the journey. In other words, at this point the more active phase of selling begins.

CHAPTER V

THE PREPARATION OF THE SELLING TALK

Analysis of the Talking Point.—To build up a logical argument that will make the most powerful appeal, the nature of the offer, whether of goods or of service, must first be analyzed. This analysis will reveal those special features—often called "talking points" or "points of contact"—which can be elaborated so as to appeal to as many and as varied buying motives as possible. Everything salable has these talking points, otherwise it is so obviously inferior a product that it is unworthy of a salesman's attention. These various talking points have to be woven into a fluent sales talk which is readily adaptable to any situation and to any type of buyer.

Each talking point must be made to appeal to one or more definite buying motives. The salesman marshals these talking points and presents them in such a way as to make them strike the imagination of the buyer—and stick in his mind.

An intricate, expensive, and complicated article has obviously a large number of talking points. A plain and simply constructed article in every-day use may seem to have few. Analysis, however, will reveal that much can be said about anything that is worth offering for sale, and still more about the advantages of any offer to a particular buyer. The salesman's problem lies mainly in rejecting points which are insignificant. Yet even points of quite secondary importance should be studied and elaborated into arguments, as these may prove efficacious when other and apparently stronger talking points fail of effect.

Constructing the Sales Arguments for a Wholesale Sale.—Let us take as our first example for analysis that prosaic every-day article, a loaf of bread. One loaf of bread looks much like another. In price, shape, appearance, and ingredients it is practically the same as other loaves. Still, if a firm bakes bread in sufficient quantity to warrant the employment of salesmen, there must be something notable about its loaves.

Let us presume that the bread to be analyzed is a special advertised brand called White's Cream Bread, retailing at the usual price. In the sale of such a product as bread there is no sales argument that competing firms cannot use. Nevertheless, the salesman must prepare a list of talking points whether or not these are used by competitors, as the arguments may not be known to his customers. Facts which seem entirely obvious and commonplace to one person are very often new and interesting to another.

The prospect in the case in point is probably a retail grocer who buys for resale. Therefore the talking points that will appeal to him must first of all be based on his desire for gain. A list of these is:

Profit
Demand
Price
Terms
Service

Other motives for buying that might be appealed to in a less degree are imitation, or rivalry, caution, and, of course, friendliness.

A prospect will probably be influenced in placing an order if the fact is brought to his attention that competing grocers also buy the bread. If the bakery enjoys an established reputation his caution will be appealed to by emphasizing the fact that the bread is furnished by a reputable and well-known house.

The grocer will also want to know something about the processes of manufacture so that he can explain why he particularly recommends White's Cream Bread. He knows that if he can give the consumer good reasons for buying, his sales will increase. And so other obvious talking points will be:

Ingredients
Nourishment
Palatability
Purity

We will now build up these talking points into arguments which may serve as "points of contact" with the grocer, bearing in mind that these little talks merely illustrate the salesman's complete equipment, from which he selects only those arguments that occasion demands or that he believes will make the strongest appeal.

The Appeal to Profit.—The argument appealing to the dominant motive of profit might be elaborated in this way:

> Your bread business, Mr. Jones, should be one of the most important departments of your store. If it isn't it can be made the most important for these reasons:
>
> First, you may not realize that on every dollar's worth of bread you buy daily you make an actual profit of $62.40 a year. Just figure it out. A dollar's worth of bread at 10 cents a loaf means ten loaves. On ten loaves you are making a profit of 20 cents a day, or nearly $1.20 a week, which is $62.40 a year. As you do not pay for the bread until it is sold you invest no money in producing this revenue.
>
> Second, customers who buy bread come into daily contact with your store. This is valuable because those who now come into the store only occasionally, when they buy bread from you, will get into the habit of visiting your store regularly. Bread, like milk, is a household commodity that the consumer must order daily. Therefore, to handle a well-known reliable brand such as ours must increase your business by creating more regular customers for other things besides bread.

Suppose, for example, the housewife who trades with you runs out of potatoes. She thinks she will get along without them for the day. She finds, however, that she is running short of bread and she needs another loaf. Consequently, she rings you up on the phone or sends a messenger or calls herself to ask you to deliver a peck of potatoes, perhaps some breakfast cereal, maybe some coffee or tea, together with the loaf of bread she needs. Bread may thus bring far more profit into your store than you get from its sale. Yet, as before explained, you can make as much as $62.40 a year on every dollar's worth you buy day by day without the investment of a single cent on your part. You see the importance of handling bread and especially such a line as White's Cream Bread, which, once tried, is invariably used again and again.

Demand.—The argument as to demand naturally follows that of profit. Here the emphasis can be laid on the fact that to refuse to handle a brand of bread for which a demand has been created is to refuse business:

The sale of White's Cream Bread is so great that people of this community expect almost every grocer to keep it. The grocer who does not is refusing business. You see, Mr. Jones, we have been advertising this bread since 1875 and during more than forty years' experience as bakers we have built up such a reputation for quality that many people insist upon having our bread and no other. We sell 2,000 loaves a day right in this section of the town, and that means a loaf every day to every second family. Many customers who now and then come into your store insist upon White's Bread and no other. If you don't keep it, you simply turn away business in many other lines.

Price.—Price in its relation to profit has been already covered. However, the dealer may be thinking that he can make more profit by selling a cheaper brand of bread. The following argument meets this objection before it is made:

The price is 10 cents a loaf—the usual price of bread sold at wholesale. We cannot offer you any special inducement as to price. We don't think it is a good thing to do so. A firm that offers to sell you a loaf of bread for 7 or 8 cents is going to injure your business. A loaf of bread of the quality of ours cannot be made and sold for a profit at less than 10 cents. A loaf at a lower price simply means cheaper ingredients; it lacks the palatability of our bread; it fails to please customers; and in the end you lose more than you might gain through the extra cent or two profit on each loaf sold.

Terms.—The terms are another aspect of price which can be set forth so as to appeal to the motive of gain:

You make a settlement of our account once a week. You will have sold from 7 to 10 days' supply of bread before you are asked to pay for it. Suppose you sell 50 loaves of bread a day (and many of our customers sell a 100), that means $6.00 a day income, or roughly $36.00 in hand before you are asked to settle your account. Thus instead of investing any money in stocking our goods, we really advance you money with which to carry on your business for brief periods.

Service.—Here the emphasis can be laid on the means by which the firm helps the dealer sell the goods—and thus make more profit:

We make two deliveries every day—one early in the morning and the other at noon. If you wish, we shall be glad to supply you with a case in which to store the bread—an attractive piece of store equipment that you will be glad to have standing on your counter.

As you have not yet handled our line, we shall be glad to help you create a demand for it. If you will give us the names of your customers we will send our advertising postal cards, each one good for a loaf of our bread at your store. We redeem these postal cards from you at the regular selling price of 12 cents each. This is a special advertising plan which none of our competitors offer. Experience has proved that it will always start sales and incidentally will bring many

new customers into your store. We will also, if you wish, supply you with a list of high-class people in your district.

Reputation.—The dealer is interested in the bread's reputation only so far as this helps to sell more bread. Therefore the argument takes the following form:

So far, Mr. Jones, we have considered only the profit on the sale of our bread. Now let us consider in how many ways our bread will appeal to the consumer who comes into your store to ask for it because she knows and likes our brand; or who, having once tried our brand for the same reason, will buy it again and again.

Our concern was founded in 1875 by the father of the present managing director. His idea was to bake the best bread that could possibly be baked at the price. That idea has been lived up to for more than forty years. We have customers of forty years' standing on our books. We hold them because we satisfy them, etc., etc.

Ingredients.—The eloquence of the salesman when describing the product in detail need be limited only by the patience of the listener:

In the manufacture of White's Cream Bread the several thousand quarts of milk that are used daily are supplied from our own farm in order to insure milk with the real, creamy flavor. Our cows are pasture-fed when the grass is green and growing, and in winter they are housed in dairies which are bright and sanitary as a new pin. Consequently, the milk that goes into this bread is milk of the purest quality, unskimmed, rich, creamy, with a high percentage of butter fat. To let you into a trade secret, Mr. Jones, it is the use of milk of superior quality that is largely the secret of finely flavoured bread.

As regards the flour that goes into this bread, we cannot control it quite to the extent that we control the milk supply. We do, however, buy only high-grade standard brands that have a reputation behind them for quality and in this way we maintain our own reputation.

Palatability.—

> The ingredients put into our bread make it more pleasing to the taste than any other brand which does not enjoy the same advantage in its source of supply. You can sell a limited amount of bread or any other food by advertising; but what sells food in the largest quantity in the long run is the satisfied palates of those who eat it. We believe our bread pleases the palate as much as any bread can. Just try our brand yourself, Mr. Jones, and see if you don't agree with me . . . .

Every Proposition Has Its Talking Points.—Enough, perhaps, has been written about this special brand of bread. The reader may object that the article chosen for analysis is a standard article with a history and a reputation behind it and with unusual advantages in the way of service attached to it, and that therefore it is easily possible to build up a convincing sales talk. But what has been said in this case applies in broad outline to all other brands of bread. The point is that even if you take such an apparently commonplace article as bread, which has no beauty or charm, nor much that can be claimed for it on the score of palatability or even profit, it is still quite possible to make out a strong selling case.

It rests with the salesman and his department head to analyze the offer he is presenting and ascertain its talking points. On this framework he then constructs those arguments which will appeal to every type of customer and to almost every buying motive.

The Talking Points of a Specialty.—If so much can be said about such an article as bread, how much more interesting must be the arguments in favor of a specialty of any kind. A salesman handling a specialty at a fairly high price will rarely need to construct his own selling talk. The general practice among firms of any standing is to train their represen-

tatives in the art of demonstrating the product before sending them on the road. Some houses maintain special training schools and publish sales manuals and other literature in which the summarized experience of the sales force is presented for the benefit of the beginners; these manuals embody the experience of hundreds of men in tackling a special sales problem. Certain methods have been found to bring better and quicker results than others and these the salesman is expected to study and apply. Manifestly each salesman will modify and adjust his instructions and his material to his own personality. To neglect such adjustment is to invite mediocrity, if not absolute failure.

The elaboration of the talking points of such an article as a printing press, an adding machine, or an automobile, would occupy many pages of this volume. To illustrate the point that there is never any dearth of facts that can be elaborated in this way, consider the service offered by a laundry. A laundry sells only service, and a service of any kind is classed among specialties. We will suppose that Green's Laundry offers its services at prevailing rates and that it is much like any other laundry. In the sale of service, the motive to appeal to is satisfaction; in such a competitive field as the laundry business the arguments in favor of one laundry over another will finally hinge upon satisfaction in proportion to the price paid.

Some of the talking points that appeal to this motive are listed below. Every laundry offers most of these services but not necessarily in the same degree or the same proportion:

Individual attention
Starching to individual taste
Dating
Packing
Repairing
Delivery

Dependability
Security from tearing, shrinking, or fading
Liberal adjustment
Sanitation
Thoroughness

It is not necessary here to take up space in elaborating each of these talking points into appeals to the motives of satisfaction, pride, caution, and so on. After the salesman has ascertained his talking points and decided on the motives to appeal to, he should have little difficulty in constructing suitable sales arguments. Of course, thoughtful and patient effort is involved in preparing these.

Analysis of Goods Not Needed for a Retail Sale.—The refinement of analysis so frequently necessary before a convincing sales talk can be built up for either a wholesale or a specialty sale would for the most part be out of place in a retail sale. The retail salesman should know the facts as to quality. If, for instance, he is selling fabrics, carpets, tools, or anything in which wearing quality is an important factor, he should study his goods sufficiently to be able to explain to the customer wherein lies the value of the thing under inspection. When wearing qualities count for less in determining the purchase than looks, style, or palatability, desire can be aroused by appealing to pleasure, or to pride and satisfaction. Instead of a minute knowledge of a particular line, the retail salesperson requires a general all-round knowledge of his stock. And his knowledge should cover each point that customers are likely to be interested in. The distinguishing characteristics of quality, design, source, mode of manufacture, and the like, are valuable if not essential in retail selling.

Method of Learning Arguments.—After deciding what to say and in how many different ways to say it, the salesman should write each talking point on a separate card and on the

reverse side the appropriate sales argument and the buying motive to which appeal is made. Then, by shuffling the cards and referring to the face of the first one and then another for its talking point, he can practice the delivery of his arguments until he is approximately "word perfect," prompting himself when need arises by reference to the back of the card.

Many helpful suggestions for the construction of effective sales arguments will be found in various chapters of this work. Meanwhile much emphasis can profitably be laid upon the importance of this drill. The salesman must first carefully think over what he is going to say and how his appeal can be most effectively worded. He must then so drill himself in every point that he is able to explain the merits of his offer clearly and fluently—and above all things, in the most convincing manner.

During the course of every interview he will find various objections raised to making the purchase. The salesman must consequently forecast objections as well as prepare a thorough set of sales arguments, if he is to meet the buyer adequately equipped and armed at every point. The methods of handling objections are so important that they are treated at length later in this volume. For the present the student need only bear in mind the general nature of this problem.

Advantages of Learning Arguments Verbatim.—The salesman who fails to learn his arguments verbatim is obliged while talking to concentrate his thought upon what he is going to say next. If the talking points and the phraseology in which they are expressed are fully and firmly fixed in his mind, he can present them like the finished actor who has learned his part—naturally and without effort. He can then give close attention to the prospect's views and be ready to take advantage of every opening that will permit an effective reply to a question or an objection.

If the salesman thoroughly masters and memorizes his

argument in its numerous phases, there will be no danger of repeating the argument as if by rote in half-hearted fashion, and still less of stuttering and stumbling. He need never be at a loss for power of expression or a ready reply. And naturally the phrasing must be adapted to an easy, conversational style, avoiding lengthy or clumsy sentences or any affectation.

Nothing impresses a prospective buyer more than for a salesman to state his case in crisp and logical phraseology and meet every question and every objection courteously and decisively. On the other hand, little does so much to create distrust as inability either to explain the merits of an offer logically and readily or to meet an objection when raised.

To repeat, the salesman who takes his work earnestly and seriously will never trust to a fluent and ready tongue for the construction of his argument. Many a glib talker who admires his own verbosity only irritates the buyer because he fails to present his argument *clearly, persuasively, and logically.* Clear, persuasive, and logical presentation requires it be put down in black and white and closely studied. The salesman must use his own phraseology in preparing his arguments, even though his firm provides him with such material. Unless he memorizes talking points written in language that he continually uses, his presentation of them will sound forced, unnatural, and at variance with his general style of expression.

A sales talk does not consist of a mere description of what the salesman has to offer the customer or what the thing offered will do for the customer. A convincing argument is a composite appeal to the buying motive which is strongest in a particular case; to the temperament of the customer; and to the general attitude of the customer toward the salesman. This argument, as explained in the preceding chapter, is to be so modified that insensibly it attracts attention, rouses interest, and from interest leads to desire and action.

CHAPTER VI

THE GENERALSHIP OF THE PREAPPROACH

The Value of a Few Definite Facts about the Prospect.— Two life insurance salesmen representing different companies called upon the head of a large brokerage house. Atkins knew nothing more than that the prospect was a cautious, successful business man with a reputation for driving a hard bargain. So he emphasized the advantages of insurance from the viewpoint of safety and business protection and he laid stress upon the financial strength of his company. His appeal was made wholly to business acumen. While the prospect seemed interested, no decision was reached.

Thomas, his competitor, before calling on the broker made a few inquiries about him. In addition to the information possessed by Atkins, he ascertained that the prospect was a martinet in business and also in his home. The only person before whom his severity ever relaxed was a crippled daughter on whom he lavished all his affection. He seldom mentioned her and few people knew of her. Thomas discovered this fact through a friend who was a member of a club to which the broker belonged.

When Thomas opened his interview he outlined the advantages of his offer as briefly as possible and then "felt" for a decision. As he expected, this was in the negative. He continued:

> Mr. Blank, you are a successful business man. You have a justly earned reputation as a shrewd investor. You can place your money to much better advantage than the majority

of business men. But your capital, or most of it, is at present tied up in industries which may or may not prove prosperous in years to come. The normal course in most businesses is growth and expansion followed by a decline and in many cases failure. If you should die or have a serious breakdown—and these are possibilities you must contemplate—your genius for investing ceases. Your present investments may not prove so profitable in the future as they are now. If others had charge of the investing of your money they might lose it, and if they did your family would suffer.

Now think of the future, say, of your daughter, under these circumstances. She might be compelled to live under conditions which compared with her present position would be almost proverty. Deprived of the comforts she is accustomed to, it would be doubly hard for her. You are entitled to take chances in your own business but ought you to make those dependent upon you share the risks which you as a business man incur? An annuity such as I have suggested would lift your daughter above any future possibility of want

The appeal here was made first to pride, the suggestion being that few equaled the broker in his genius for investing money; and second to parental affection—but in a brief and businesslike way to appeal to the broker's temperament. The offer immediately took on another aspect in his eyes and a sale eventually followed.

How the Specialty Salesman Makes a Preapproach.—This sale illustrates the value of the preapproach—the purpose of which is to ascertain something of vital interest to the prospect and then connect the selling arguments thereto. Its importance is well illustrated by the methods of specialty salesmen.

Before a cash register salesman tries to sell a machine he carefully inspects his ground. He enters the store of an unknown prospect—let us say, a grocer—at a busy period of the day when several customers are waiting to be served. He

then makes a trifling purchase which necessitates the giving of change, so that he can study the cash system in vogue. He notes the kind of cash drawer used and the method of handling the sale. If an old-fashioned till is in use he recognizes a good starting point for his sales argument. If possible he enters into conversation with the clerk. From the baskets on the floor he ascertains how the merchant delivers the goods and from the bills in the baskets the method of handling charge transactions. From the fixtures and showcases he notes whether or not the business is progressive. From the kind of scales used he judges whether the retailer is a believer in modern improvements; from his store windows whether he is smart enough to take advantage of advertising space; from the general appearance of the store and the clerks whether he is a believer in neatness and discipline.

Armed with this information the salesman is in the position of a lawyer who prepares his brief before the case is tried. He is fully equipped to point out the weakness of the store's present system—and his knowledge is based not on surmise but on the facts of existing conditions. The influence of an argument based on fact is far, far greater than one dependent on guesses or random assertions.

Thus the advantages of using an up-to-date register which is adapted to the special needs of a particular store, can be pointed out much more logically and clearly than would be possible without the knowledge gained by the preapproach.

The Strategical Character of the Preapproach.—The preapproach, especially if the sale relates to a high-priced specialty, may be likened to the policy of the general who never enters into battle until he is fully prepared. Long before the clash takes place he studies the ground—its topography, its defences, its strong and weak places; he gathers all possible information concerning the enemy—his whereabouts, his strength, the dis-

position of his forces. He determines the base from which he will operate, the objective to be won, and the line along which he will conduct his operations; then he fixes on a definite and detailed plan of action.

Like preparation furnishes the salesman with valuable information that, if tactfully used, will give him the advantage of choosing his ground and the point of his attack. A salesman who ascertains the weak places in a customer's defence knows both the arguments which will be most effective and whether any objections to the purchase are real or merely excuses. Meeting the objection, as will be seen later, is often half the battle in making a sale.

Illustrations of the Value of the Preapproach.—A successful sewing-machine salesman knew before he called on a certain housewife that she was the mother of a family of five, that her husband was earning $40 a week, that she was clever with her needle, and that much of the sewing was done in the home with an antiquated and out-of-date hand-machine.

"I have come to show you how you can do twice the amount of sewing you now do without tiring your arm, Mrs. Smith," was his opening remark.

The encyclopedia salesman ascertains the ages and traits of the children in the home. He bases his appeal on the fact than an encyclopedia is just the thing for children of more than average intelligence and will be of invaluable assistance to them in acquiring more knowledge than the average child and will help them in their education in future years. He demonstrates the value of the work in following up a hobby or developing budding talent. He thus appeals to parental pride and the thirst for knowledge.

Useful Information for the Retail Salesman.—Retail employees can also make profitable use of any facts or informa-

tion about their customers; these may be picked up by means of gossip, by studying the local papers, or by keeping the ears alert during social hours.

A retail salesman heard that a certain customer who came into the store regularly to buy a daily paper and an occasional magazine was about to go on a voyage to Europe. When the customer next visited the store the salesman mentioned how interested he was to hear of the contemplated trip. The conversation was thus led to the unusual sights to be seen in foreign countries where interesting and peculiar customs and habits prevail and casual mention made of the fascination of owning a good camera and recording these novel sights. The suggestion bore fruit. When the customer left on his voyage he took with him a complete photographic outfit—purchased at the store of the salesman who made the suggestion.

Try to Find Out the Customer's Name.—While information about a prospect's needs and his likes and dislikes is the most important factor to be secured in the preapproach, other details are worth attention. One of these is the customer's name. To know its correct pronunciation places the salesman in an advantageous position. To address somebody by name furnishes a point of contact, even though a slight one, and everyone likes to hear his name pronounced correctly.

The foregoing point is worth bearing in mind by retail salespeople. Customers in a store like to think that their patronage is appreciated. When they are addressed by name, it signifies a desire to please and serve. A regular customer takes it as a matter of course to be addressed by name; but a person who is so addressed on the second visit is almost sure to feel gratified by the small attention and, in consequence, a little more at home in the store. To make customers feel at home paves the way for the repeat order. Therefore, every retail salesperson should make a point of memorizing the names

of new customers so that they can be addressed by name when next they call.

Even when selling a trifling article from house to house the specialty salesman makes a practice of asking for the name of the family living next door. If the housewife is particularly obliging he may request and note the names of several of her neighbors so that if he is refused a hearing at the next house he will still have in reserve the names of other prospects.

Ascertain the Quantity of Goods Used.—Useful preliminary information for the wholesale salesman includes the amount of goods usually ordered in a given case.

Wholesale houses generally prepare these figures for their representatives' use, but for obvious reasons they are not available when an unknown prospect is being called upon for the first time. A cursory inspection of the buyer's shelves, if he is a retailer, will indicate roughly the amount of stock carried and enable the salesman to estimate the quantity that will probably be ordered. The value of this information lies in the fact that it enables the largest reasonable purchase to be suggested without incurring the risk of irritating the buyer by suggesting an amount far beyond his needs or a quantity so small as to offend his dignity.

Where the Neglect of the Preapproach Proved Fatal.—The importance of the foregoing points is illustrated by the following incident.

A young salesman representing a stove house was visiting a small town in Montana. The general store of the community was housed in a rambling building and filled with a heterogeneous stock of goods. The part of the store frequented by customers was much like any other general store and did not indicate an exceptional turnover. Its owner was shabbily dressed and unkempt.

Appearances are often deceptive and, furthermore, the same importance is not ascribed to neatness and up-to-date equipment in a small town as in a city. This storekeeper was a shrewd buyer with a keen sense of humor. A favorite query of his was to ask an unknown salesman what quantity of goods the latter thought he ought to buy.

When this particular poser was put to the salesman, the young man first glanced around the store to size up, as he thought, the situation. After a moment's reflection he advised a stock of not more than twenty stoves—a dozen low-priced numbers and an assortment of the higher-priced ones.

"Well, my trade last year in stoves alone was well over $10,000," replied the storekeeper to the startled salesman, "but as I want a little concrete advice as to what stock to order this year and as I can't build up my business by guessing or trading with guessers, I'll wait until another stove salesman comes around." With this the interview closed.

After the crestfallen salesman had withdrawn, a few inquiries at the local hotel and among townspeople elicited the information that this storekeeper employed a dozen teams to distribute his goods; that he handled a substantial mail order business as well; and that his yearly sales were well over the quarter-million dollar mark. A cursory preapproach would have told the salesman that the buyer was one of the most important in the state.

The Preapproach Essential Before Estimating.—In trades and businesses which render a service for which estimates are frequently submitted, the preapproach is a useful means of finding the suitable opening wedge. A salesman of printing, for instance, need never be at a loss for likely customers, however dull trade may be. Advertisers especially are large users of printed matter and their material is distributed free to all who ask for it. The salesman who keeps his eyes open for publishers, or users of the kind of printing for which

his house is equipped can often gain an interview and an order by first submitting samples and prices. This necessitates a careful and thorough preapproach and study of the firms that seem to be the most likely prospects.

In making quotations, as in all other statements of fact, it is important to be clear and definite. Aimless quoting of prices for a lot of things a buyer cannot use only bores him; complicated figures which need close study irritate him. But clear and concise quotations for the kind and *amount* of goods he usually buys are interesting items of information to which he will be sure to give careful consideration.

CHAPTER VII

WINNING THE INTERVIEW

To Break in Is Often Half the Battle.—A keen young salesman carefully trained himself in the art of demonstrating his goods; he committed every conceivable talking point to memory; the old hands at the game taught him how to answer all likely objections with apt and telling replies—until he knew what to say and do under every conceivable circumstance. Finally he was sent out on the road to interview heads of large corporations who usually had to be reached through a clerk at the information desk.

He started on his round brimful of enthusiasm. He returned in less than a month with all his zeal gone and without an order. When asked to explain the cause of his failure his answer was, "I knew just what to do when I met the prospect. The trouble was I never got near him."

A salesman may study his goods and his market, memorize his talking points, assemble them into two or three complete sales talks, and be adept in meeting every conceivable objection; yet if he is held at arm's length and can only occasionally break through the outer defences of his prospects his sales record will be low.

One Definite Rule You Can Always Apply.—There is no sure method of getting into the buyer's presence. There is, however, one rule which every salesman can safely adopt at all times: Never be discouraged when you are refused an interview, but keep on calling. The very persistence of your calls

will in time at least create respect and in nine cases out of ten break down opposition.

Buyers often judge the mettle of a new salesman largely by his persistence in calling regularly in spite of rebuffs. The man who turns up again and again in the face of previous "turndowns," always with the same smile and always with the attitude that to grant him an interview is the most natural thing in the world, will be sure to win the interview in the end.

Reasons Why the Buyer Refuses an Interview.—It should be remembered that the prospective customer's refusal of an interview may result from any of several reasons which may not exist at the next visit. He is very likely far too busy with other affairs. Possibly he decides that the goods are of no immediate interest and that an interview will be a waste of time. Again, his relations with a firm which at present supplies him may be such as he does not wish to break off. When the salesman again calls the former condition may no longer exist and a chance for an opening arises.

The refusal may not be due to business but to purely personal reasons. Perhaps the buyer feels unwell or worried—or he may be anxious to leave the office early to meet his wife—or he declined because of any or more of a score of reasons that keep him from granting an interview at the time of the salesman's call. Whatever the reason the refusal is usually in the form of a stereotyped excuse to the effect that "Mr. Brown is too busy to see you today," or "Mr. Brown says there is nothing wanting on this trip."

Thus when no indication is given of the reason for refusal the presumption is that another call may prove more effective.

When to Force an Interview.—Every refusal to grant an interview creates a situation that needs to be handled according to the circumstances of that case.

If the salesman represents a wholesale house and knows that he will be making the same trip several times during the course of a year, the better policy may be to leave his card if the buyer will not see him. As he leaves the office he says to the information clerk or the telephone operator, "I am sorry Mr. Jones cannot see me today. I will call on my next round, when I hope to find he has more time to spare."

In such a case pertinacity and regularity in calling—always with the same good nature—will in time break down the opposition of any buyer who has no personal grudge against the salesman or his house.

The specialty salesman can sometimes call again only after a long interview. If his work is to be productive and pay for the heavy cost of personal solicitation he must gain the ear of a certain number of customers daily. To serve the purpose of an entering wedge advertising literature or a series of form letters will probably have been sent ahead of him with the object of interesting the prospective customer sufficiently to make him willing to grant an interview. A refusal after this preliminary approach will imply that he is still not interested so that other tactics must be adopted.

In a few cases ingenuity may be needed or a little audacity in forcing an interview may be recommended. It is advisable, however, never to try to force one's presence on a customer until he has been called upon several times without avail, or unless correspondence has preceded the call.

Polite Insistence Always Worth a Trial.—Sometimes a genial way of insisting upon an interview may prove effective; certainly it is always worth a trial.

A salesman selling a specialty in the mechanical field (broaching machines) made a special trip to a large automobile factory near Detroit. A pleasant young woman at the information desk sent his card in to the purchasing agent, whom he

particularly wished to see. A messenger returned with the words scribbled on the back of the card: "Too busy to see you today—in weekly conference."

"How long does this meeting last?" he asked the girl.

"About two hours."

"I'll wait until it is over and then perhaps the purchasing agent will see me."

"It's useless," she replied. "He will be much too busy and he always refuses to see anybody after the weekly conference. Did you arrange an appointment?"

"No," replied the salesman.

"Then I'd advise you to do so and call again."

The salesman paused to reflect as he turned to leave. After a few moments he took out another card and wrote on the back of it:

"I merely want to shake you by the hand and look you in the eye so that next year when I call again and you have more time you will know what I look like."

He asked the girl to send this message in to the purchasing agent. The card returned with the answer, "Call at four." He had finally secured the coveted interview.

When to Avoid Mentioning the Nature of One's Business.—Occasionally the better policy is not to announce the name of the firm represented or the nature of its business. This is peculiarily applicable to the sale of certain specialties in which the prospect thinks he is not interested. In such a case it may be necessary to gain admittance by pertinacious insistence without stating the nature of the business until face to face with the buyer.

For instance, when an automatic scale salesman enters a store he walks up to the person whom he judges to be the storekeeper and says, "Is this Mr. Johnson?" If the person addressed proves to be a clerk he is flattered as being mistaken

for the proprietor. Should the clerk reply, "Mr. Johnson is busy," the salesman answers, "Very well, I will wait a few minutes until he is at liberty." If the proprietor is out, "Very well, I will call again. When is he likely to be in?"

If the clerk asks, "What is your business? What do you want to see him about?" the salesman quietly replies, "I want to see Mr. Johnson personally. I will wait until I can see him." If the clerk is insistent or reveals annoyance at the secrecy, the salesman pleasantly answers, "My name is Smith. Will you please tell Mr. Johnson that Mr. Smith wishes to see him and explain his business to him personally."

When the salesman finally comes face to face with the proprietor, if he is asked to explain his business, he openly states the reason for his call—"I represent the —— Scale Company." This opening puts the salesman on a square footing. If the prospect has any objections to granting an interview or any reason for refusing to listen to the salesman's talk about automatic scales his fire is drawn at once. The problem of this salesman's procedure from this point on is treated in subsequent chapters.

Ask for an Interview with a Definite Person.—As a rule it is an advantage when seeking an interview to be able to ask to see Mr. So-and-So rather than an indefinite person, such as the buyer, the manager, or the merchandise man.

A salesman handling office supplies found that whenever he asked if the "buyer of supplies" was in he nearly always met with a request for his card or was asked to state his business. He finally concluded that the very fact of asking for "the buyer" hurt his chances of winning an interview.

He decided that it would be better to find out the buyer's name and introduce himself in such a way as to avoid immediate opposition. On some occasions he was able to ascertain the buyer's name in advance but more often he entered the

office of a prospect without this information. To conceal his ignorance his method was "I want to see Mr. — er — Mr. —er; what *is* his name? Who is the buyer of office supplies?"

The girl at the information desk generally replied, "Is it Mr. —— you mean?" to which the salesman answered "Yes. That's the man I want. Please tell him that Mr. Blank is here." The girl would then either telephone to the buyer or send in a message to the effect that "Mr. Blank has called, sir." The buyer possibly wondering who Mr. Blank was, would in some cases see the salesman so as to satisfy his curiosity.

Expect the Interview.—The winning of an interview as in the example already cited is much easier if one approaches with the attitude of expecting to receive it. When we doubt whether a privilege will be granted we invite a refusal; but if we treat it as a matter of course we are much more likely to receive it. Obviously when a salesman calls and asks if the buyer or the manager is in he does not know the name of the person he wants to see. A question such as this exposes his business and his ignorance. The information clerk goes to the buyer and says:

"There's a salesman who wants to see you, sir."

"Tell him I'm busy," is a frequent reply even before the prospect looks at the card.

The salesman should fortify his persistence by reflecting that three-quarters of all business is transacted by means of salesmen and that it is all in the day's routine for wholesale buyers, purchasing agents, and retailers to refuse at times to grant an interview. A prerogative of the salesman is to be persistent, provided he believes he has something of interest and profit to show to the buyer.

The Adroit Use of Samples.—Samples can sometimes be used as a means of gaining an interview when the direct ap-

proach fails. The wholesale salesman who wishes to display his supplies and is not given an opportunity to do so often feels that if only the buyer could be shown the new lines, business would be secured in spite of a previous reluctance to look at them.

Among the customers of a wholesale millinery house was a certain large specialty store buyer who was usually inaccessible if the salesman chanced to call while he was in his office. Not infrequently the word would come back, "Nothing is wanted on this trip," or "I'm too busy." It is true the salesman might have sent up a second message to the inaccessible buyer saying that he wished to show a few special lines and that he wanted to see him for a few minutes only, but experience proved that the chance of thus winning an interview was slender. Finally as the best way out of the difficulty he adopted the following plan:

When he returned to his hotel late in the afternoon he selected a few "specials" which he thought would prove most tempting to the buyer who had refused to see him. He sent these by special messenger to the office of the buyer with a note worded as follows:

"Sorry you were so busy when I called today. To save your time I am sending by special messenger a few samples of my novelties which I feel I ought to show you before leaving town. Look them over at your leisure between now and ten o'clock tomorrow morning. I will be at the store about that time. I don't want to leave town without shaking hands with you at any rate."

No plan is ever uniformly successful, but persistence in trying different methods will secure many interviews that otherwise would never be granted. Every wholesale salesman carries among his samples two or three attractive leaders to be used in securing an opening, and he usually also knows which items in his line will most please the fancy of each buyer. The

use of these in the manner indicated will often be found effective when everything else has failed. The buyer naturally looks over the samples, and whether interested or not, at least feels under the obligation of thanking the salesman for the trouble he has taken—if only by "shaking hands."

Heroic Methods Sometimes Needed.—The more difficult an article is to sell, such as a specialized service or a high-priced specialty, the greater as a rule will be the obstacles encountered when breaking through the outer barricades with which many business men and buyers protect themselves from the insistent salesman. The more heroic, accordingly, must be the means adopted to get an interview. The result, however, must justify the salesman's persistence. An interview gained by means of insistence, or by means of "nerve," would be worse than useless if, when it opens, the salesman is unable to take complete command of the situation.

A salesman representing an advertising novelty house which was as yet unknown, knew that if he could once secure the ear of certain prospects his offer was such that in nine cases out of ten business would result. The words "advertising novelty," however, conveyed little to the business man beyond the fact that one more salesman wanted to see him, probably waste his time. The salesman's firm supplied its men with tasteful business cards, but as these explained nothing they all too frequently acted as a hindrance rather than a help. The problem was to win the ear of a prospect before announcing the nature of the business.

The salesman determined to change his tactics and discard the use of a card as a means of passing the outer guard. When asked by the information clerk what he wanted he said, "Tell Mr. Jones that Mr. Blank has called."

When the messenger returned with the request for his card, as was frequently the case, he replied; "I have no cards. Wait a minute, though, I will give you a note."

Thereupon tearing a plain sheet of paper from a pad he wrote in pencil, "Must see you now for four minutes if possible to make report complete. Persistent in asking for an interview because the matter is important to you."

This free and easy message while not very explicit was at least courageous. We all admire courage and pertinacity and neither a business man nor his buyer ever resents the forcing of an interview if the salesman quickly justifies his aggressiveness in his opening statement.

The Courageous Audacity of a Book Salesman.—If the path of the salesman selling such a specialty as advertising is thorny, that of the high-priced book salesman is barricaded with barbed wire. As a rule the book salesman works doggedly and persistently, knowing that the law of averages will in the end atone for all things and that if he only calls on a sufficient number of persons he will gain a certain number of orders. Some men, however, adopt a more courageous attitude with proportionately better results. They know that their address and personality are such as to permit them to take chances in securing an interview by means of courageous diplomacy, and ingenuity is often revealed in the means they adopt to this end.

An adept in salesmanship with a fair share of that quality we may call courageous audacity determined to secure an order for a high-priced set of books from a bank president who was a collector of fine books. There seemed little hope of an interview because a man of commercial eminence will not as a rule see anybody until his secretary has first inspected and passed upon the names of those seeking admittance. A few casual inquiries revealed the fact that the bank president was known to his college chums by the nickname of "Chic," an abbreviation of his first name, Charles. Armed with this information the salesman called and asked to see his man.

"Will you give me your card, please?" the secretary politely requested.

The salesman opened his pocketbook—to discover that he had forgotten to renew his supply. "I'm sorry to say I happen to be out of cards," he said, "but if you will tell Mr. Blank that Mr. Jenkins would like to speak to him for a few moments, I'm sure he'll be glad to see me."

"What is your business? The president sees nobody without this information. Are you soliciting a subscription of any kind?"

The salesman answered, "If you will take this note to him he will see me"—and he wrote on a piece of paper: "Dear Chic, I want to see you for a minute. F. J."

The secretary read this intimate message, hesitated for a moment, and then took it to the president. A few minutes later the salesman was asked to come in.

His opening remarks were, "Mr. Blank, I have never had the pleasure of meeting you before in my life and I apologize for taking a liberty with your name. But I knew of no other way to see you. I know how many people want your ear and how necessary it is to guard your time, but this proposition had to be put before you because it is one that will surely appeal to you. It will take me exactly eight and a half minutes to do so. If you say 'No,' I leave right away. Do I win my interview?"

All this was said, not with an air of apologetic deference, but with the manner of a man who is not ashamed of what he has done and is quite ready to take the consequences if he has made a tactical error. The personality of the book salesman appealed to the president and his sporting instinct appreciated the situation. Audacity is always admired. With the right touch of genial salesmanship, audacity will carry a man through where timidity and hesitancy spell failure.

Sheer Nerve Sometimes Wins Out.—The biggest rewards fall to the salesman who successfully handles tasks which

require in addition to all other qualifications of salesmanship, a certain amount of audacity. Yet, as in the preceding instance, audacity in forcing one's way into the presence of the buyer is justified only by results. The offer must be such as at once to convince the prospect that it is worth his time and attention.

A new patent ash barrel only needed to be shown to be sold in nine cases out of ten. Yet the salesman handling it was frequently refused admittance because both his firm and the invention were still unknown. After sending in his card a message usually came back to the effect that "Mr. Blank is sorry he can't see you today." So the salesman changed his method. When the road to the buyer's office was in sight he would frequently reply, "Thank you," and walk right past the girl at the information desk into the buyer's sanctum. Immediately on entering he placed a model of the barrel on the prospective buyer's desk and in nine cases out of ten the buyer was too surprised to say anything for a minute or two, although occasionally he might resent the salesman's entry with such words as, "Didn't the girl tell you I couldn't see you?"

"Yes, she did, Mr. Blank," the salesman would cheerfully reply, "but that was only because you didn't know just what it is I have to offer you. Now if I am taking up your time when you are really too busy to see me, say so and I will leave at once. Meanwhile, just inspect this model of our new patent ash barrel.. It speaks for itself. Notice how these corrugated staves make it impossible to dent the sides. . . . I'll call again tomorrow morning and hear what you have to say about it."

Confidence No Justification for Impudence.—These last two examples of winning an interview represent the climax of audacity. Such measures, however, are rarely necessary, and are only for emergency use under conditions and with manipulation that justify extreme measures. The assumption that

"nerve" is an efficient substitute for honorable and sincere manliness is contemptible. For the average salesman the best method is to adhere to the well-worn road of steady pertinacity backed up by invariable cheerfulness in spite of refusals. If judgment is revealed in selecting prospects no serious difficulty will be encountered in securing all the interviews that can be handled. The house-to-house canvasser who is selling coffee will, of course, waste his time if he persistently knocks at the back door of the White House and asks for the President's wife. But where a salesman is handling an offering which he knows is worth examining, then the art of winning an interview simply resolves itself into making a sufficient number of calls in likely quarters and interesting the prospects who decline to see him by means of suitable personal letters or other advertising literature. By such means those who at first resolutely refuse an interview are finally won over and the barricades are lowered.

CHAPTER VIII

OPENING THE INTERVIEW

The Progress to Undivided Attention.—In winning the interview the salesman has obtained favorable attention for the moment; it is now his task to secure undivided attention not only to himself but more especially to his offering. This chapter deals then with this critical moment when the prospect waits with more or less impatience for the explanation of the caller's errand.

Make a Good First Impression on the Buyer.—First impressions may sometimes be misleading, but they are at times exceedingly important. Upon the impression made during the first minute or two of the salesman's interview will frequently depend the opportunity to explain his mission and thus secure a sale. For this reason in the training of the salesman emphasis is rightly laid on his personal appearance, his clothes, his manner, and his personality as a whole. When he creates an unfavorable impression because of defects in any of these points, he may fail to secure that attention which is the first step in presenting a successful sales argument; he then breaks down in his effort before he even secures an opening. When he makes a favorable impression and answers any preliminary questions in a convincing way, the prospective customer at once becomes attentive and is willing to have the proposition explained.

If the first interview is a failure, a second opening will be difficult to secure. A sale is rarely made in the first interview when the transaction is of any importance or when the first

sale is expected to be followed by repeat orders from time to time. But when a favorable impression is made during the first call and the interest of the buyer is aroused to the point of displaying some sign of geniality, then the salesman has every reason to hope that persistence in calling will ultimately lead to a trial of his line or his specialty.

The Manner of Approach.—Not only are personal neatness and general attractiveness absolute essentials, but other points likewise connected with the first stages of the interview are of the first importance. Hesitancy or confusion almost inevitably react unfavorably on the prospect; the salesman must be prepared to act with calmness and decision from beginning to end, meeting both normal and abnormal situations with poise and good nature. This accomplishment is not gained by continual experience alone, nor is one in a thousand naturally possessed of adequate temperament and speed of decision to handle the approach to a prospective customer without preparation. While special and individual cases demand particular treatment, yet the chief points to be observed in each of the three fields of salesmanship are exceedingly simple and hold good in practically every case, being subject, of course, to the salesman's own personality.

The Wholesale Manner of Approach.—On entering an office the salesman removes his hat, and in wet weather, his overcoat; these he places on a convenient chair. His bag or sample case he places by the wall out of the path of passersby. Thus he frees himself from embarrassing entanglements. This suggestion may seem somewhat absurd or superfluous, yet the prominent feature of the inexperienced salesman is clumsiness, a tendency to do the wrong thing and to stumble over himself and his possessions. So, too, he must be neither hasty nor slow; steadiness and deliberation in movement as

in speech mark the man who is sure of himself and his mission. The wholesale buyer, frequently a purchasing agent who does little else besides interview salesmen or read sales letters, is especially quick to note any clumsiness or other sign of inability and becomes indifferent forthwith.

In dealing with retail storekeepers the principle remains the same; the salesman rids himself of encumbrances quietly and without fuss, then makes himself known. One unusually successful wholesale hardware man used to make himself useful whenever he entered a store where the owner was busy or business very active; sometimes he stepped behind the counter and sold goods; sometimes he wrapped bundles; at others, if the windows were being dressed, he began helping carry the goods to the window dresser; and often enough he gradually took charge and directed the window dressing, doing the greater part of the work himself with manifest taste and skill. All this with a quiet businesslike air that gave the impression that he was part and parcel of the firm.

This quiet air of knowing what he is about and calmly going ahead and doing it is half the battle of securing favorable and undivided attention. It results from careful study of one's own temperament and of the situations that he will encounter, so that he knows beforehand exactly what he will do. In fact, many salesmen rehearse the entrance and approach under various conditions, until they are perfect in whatever part they may be called on to present.

The Specialty Manner of Approach.—This principle applies in even greater degree to the specialty salesman. He must not only convey with still greater effectiveness that he expects an interview as a matter of course, but likewise he must avoid any suggestion that ringing doorbells or visiting offices is a perfunctory and boring occupation that he has become inured to.

The house-to-house salesman has to do more than merely ring the bell. He has to suggest that he is going to enter. In the summer he does this by stepping to one side so that the screen door may be pushed open for him; in winter by brushing the snow off his coat, knocking the mud off his shoes, closing his umbrella, turning down his collar, or some similar action. In other words, he acts precisely as if he were making a social call. Once in the house he must be prepared for his next move just as the wholesale salesman is, and must display poise and ease of behavior with special care against appearing familiar or too much at home.

Appearance in Selling a Specialty.—Probably the sales which call for the greatest degree of adroitness and tact are those offering a service, such as insurance or advertising, in which the prospect must first be made to realize his need; and also the sale of a comparatively high-priced specialty, because in this case the investment is a big and unusual expenditure. When negotiating one of these sales the importance of making a favorable impression is paramount—as exemplified in the following extract taken from the sales manual of a house selling a well-known specialty. With this firm the art of approaching a customer is considered the most important detail in a sale, to which the art of closing the sale comes a close second.

> The first point in approaching the prospect is to look like a gentleman, act like a man, and make him listen to you. The next thing is—not to half persuade him that he ought to buy, but wholly to convince him that he ought to look into the subject. Free his mind at the start from the impression that you are trying to force him into buying something he doesn't want. Disclaim any such intention. But insist that it is a matter of such importance that he positively ought to investigate and judge for himself whether or not our service will be of help to him in his daily work.

Insist upon the Customer's Undivided Attention.—After being admitted to the customer's presence the salesman should decline to describe his offer until the listener is able to give him his whole attention. A common practice among business men when they are found working at their desks is to say to the unknown salesman, "Go ahead, I can listen to you while I work, I'm busy." To such a statement the salesman should promptly reply, "Thank you, I am perfectly willing to wait until you are at leisure," and the action can be suited to the word by the salesman taking a seat. The salesman breaks into the presence of the business man and occupies his time because he is convinced that his offer is worth serious consideration and the time needed to explain its merits. Therefore, if he is willing to accept only a half-hearted form of attention, he immediately and inconsistently depreciates the worth of his mission. Instead of doing business on an equal footing he adopts the attitude of asking a favor.

A salesman entered a retail store and found the merchant engaged in opening cases. The salesman was invited to "go ahead and tell his story," the merchant at the same time continuing his hammering.

"My proposition," replied the salesman, "is important enough to deserve your whole attention for a few minutes. If you find it absolutely inconvenient to give me your whole attention just now, Mr. Blank, I will call again this afternoon at whatever time you say."

The salesman's polite insistence made the merchant realize that his business must be worth serious consideration. So he ceased the work of unpacking, which as the salesman shrewdly surmized was of no immediate importance, in order to hear what the representative had to say. A manner which is courteously firm, as in the case just mentioned, will usually succeed in securing the customer's undivided attention.

A salesman new to the game usually fails to appreciate the

importance of firmly putting aside any attempt to give only partial attention to what, after all, is an important and legitimate kind of business interview. If an influential customer called on a firm and asked to see its head he would be given prompt and undivided attention. The go-ahead-and-tell-me-your-story attitude would be suicidal. Yet the importance of transactions between buyer and salesman are as a rule of much greater moment to a firm than any transactions with an individual customer. Therefore, the only dignified course is to insist upon receiving the prospect's attention.

How to Patch Up a Broken Interview.—When a prospective customer is found to be engaged with somebody else or when somebody interrupts the interview, the salesman should wait until the buyer is at liberty to give him his undivided attention. Interviews are frequently disturbed in this way. When a break occurs it is important briefly to recapitulate the selling points already made in order that the argument may lose none of its effect. If the salesman continues his talk without this recapitulation he may leave out one or two links which help to build up the mental processes which lead to desire. The very fact of being disturbed makes the customer forget for the time being what the salesman has been saying, and a repetition in very brief outline of the argument so far developed is usually a wise precaution.

Salesmen calling on the retail trade will frequently receive a curt reply that the merchant is too busy to talk, especially when the visits are made at frequent intervals. In such a case there is nothing to do but to reply cheerfully, "All right, I will call again when I am around this way next week. Hope to find you at liberty then." A cheerful response of this kind usually makes the merchant feel a trifle ashamed of his discourtesy or abruptness and the next time the salesman calls he is given a more genial reception.

Handling the Bad-Tempered Customer.—Notwithstanding careful practice in the art of approaching a customer, a salesman may still be so unfortunate as to impress the buyer unfavorably without being in any way to blame. The prospect may be in bad humor, his digestion may not be working satisfactorily, or other conditions wholly beyond the control of the salesman may be responsible for an ungracious reception. Whatever the cause, when the buyer reveals a hostile mood the salesman should not allow that ill-tempered reception to modify his own attitude. A bad-tempered greeting does not imply dislike of the salesmen, it is quite impersonal and merely indicates that the prospect is feeling bad-tempered with things in general. Ill humor can often be dissipated when it is cheerfully ignored. The salesman should continue his demonstration as if completely unaware that the buyer is not in the right frame of mind to give him close attention.

Whether or not the sullen buyer can be placated will depend upon the skill shown in winning his interest to such a degree that he forgets his ill humor. A prospect who is obviously in a state of mental irritation cannot be led to the stage of interest. Mental irritability makes the buyer more or less incompetent to concentrate his mind on the offer which is about to be placed before him. If he starts with a prejudice against this offer and then refuses to give it the consideration it deserves, his irritability quickly degenerates into annoyance. If this unfortunate stage is reached it may be advisable for the salesman to leave, postponing the matter for the time.

Never Apologize for Taking Up a Prospect's Time.—A salesman should never apologize either by word or manner for taking up a prospect's time. As before stated, his visit is as much for the buyer's benefit as his own, and his attitude should reveal this fact. The salesman who enters a customer's presence with an apology for breaking in or who in any way

implies by his manner that he is mentally apologetic, will fail to secure that undivided favorable attention which must precede the awakening of interest and desire. The salesman should assume that when the prospect is ready to be interviewed he is also ready to give all the time necessary.

When, however, the buyer takes the lead himself and explains that for certain reasons he is rushed or that he has little time to spare because he has to leave, it is then polite for the salesman to apologize with such a remark as, "I am sorry to arrive at such an inopportune moment, but since you are so busy I will make my story as brief as possible." Even here, however, the apology is not for taking up a customer's time, but for calling upon him at an inopportune moment.

The Use of a Business Card.—If the salesman represents a well-known house with a reputation behind it, which is in itself an asset in gaining an opening, it would be obviously advisable to send in his card to a prospect on whom he calls for the first time. Where, however, the name of the firm conveys little to the prospective customer and the salesman must depend wholly upon the merits of his offer and his own personality in making a sale, it is preferable to dispense with the card so that the attention of the buyer is wholly concentrated on the salesman. It is much easier to say "No," "Too busy," or to make a similar excuse while inspecting a piece of pasteboard than when directly confronting the salesman.

Many salesmen make a practice of placing a card on the desk in front of a prospect or of handing it to him at the time they make known the nature of their business. The advantage of this method is that it creates a double impression on the mind of the buyer; a disadvantage is that more attention may be given to the card than to the salesman. Whether or not a card should be used will depend largely upon the personality of the salesman and the nature of his business. Sales-

man may often leave a business card at the termination of the interview for the customer to file or a reminder of the salesman and his offering. It is a question every salesman must decide for himself.

When to Shake Hands.—The hearty handshake is considered an invariable part of a salesman's greeting. If friendly relations have already been established, the hand, of course, will be offered and cordially shaken. When approaching a stranger or a prospect who has not yet favored the salesman with an order, although a perfunctory acquaintanceship may have been established, it is not wise to offer to shake hands. Prospective customers do not as a rule gladly welcome the presence of a man who politely insists upon their listening to an explanation of his offering. Sometimes they even view his effort to gain their presence as an intrusion, although they may admire his persistence.

When, therefore, an interview is granted, if the salesman effusively offers his hand, this in a sense commits a customer to at least placing the salesman on a friendly, as distinguished from a purely business, footing. A proffered handshake may never be refused, but in the case of the taciturn and reserved or the cold and cautious type of customer, the handshake will tend rather to accentuate than to diminish reserve and caution. Where previous correspondence has in any way established an acquaintanceship, a salesman may perhaps offer to shake hands; but a safer rule to follow is to wait until a prospect offers his own hand before the salesman offers his.

The Retail Interview.—The approach of the retail salesperson to a shopper who has just entered the store requires special consideration at this point.

The customer who enters in a businesslike way obviously comes in with one of two objects in mind—either to buy cer-

tain goods or to inspect them. If the salesman is unoccupied he should at once acknowledge the shopper's presence either by stepping forward or, if he is behind the counter, by moving a step in the customer's direction. The opening remark may be, "What may I do for you today?" or it may be merely, "Good morning," or "Good afternoon," with the adjunct of "Sir," or "Madam," as the case may require. When the customer is known he or she should, of course, be addressed by name. But as in the majority of cases the shopper is a stranger, it is far more polite to show the slight deference signified by the words "Sir" or "Madam" than to address a nameless and indefinite person. Under no circumstances should any other form of address be substituted for either of these two words. "What may I do for you, 'Mister,' or 'Ma'am,' or 'Lady,'" are provincialisms used by those who wrongly imagine that the use of the words "Sir" or "Madam" denotes servility. No person of any education or breeding fails to use the word "Madam" when addressing a woman whose name is unknown. If this is the custom in the society of those who pay attention to the finer shades of manners and courtesy, it surely befits the retail salesperson to adopt the same form of address.

Helping the Retail Customer Who Is "Looking Around." —Unless a desire is shown to wander about and inspect the stock, the salesman may take it for granted that the customer requires his services. When customers come into a store without any definite intention of buying, they should not be made to feel that they are under any obligation to do so. Such a type of customer is usually of the feminine gender and quickly reveals her lack of purpose by the indefinite air with which she gazes around the store. She is usually best left to her own devices; any insistence will frequently lead to her rapid departure from the department or the store. All that the retail

salesman can safely do to gain her attention is some such inquiry as, "May I be of service to you, Madam?" If the customer replies that she is "just looking around," the salesman may add that it would be a pleasure to give her information about anything that interests her. The object is to gain the expression of a definite want or desire.

How to Handle More Than One Retail Customer.—If when the salesperson is waiting upon one customer another approaches, one of three methods may be adopted: (1) another salesperson is summoned; (2) the customer's presence is acknowledged but the interview postponed; or (3) both customers are waited on at the same time. If another salesperson can be summoned to attend to the customer, so much the better. A well-organized store usually adopts a system whereby each salesperson waits on customers in turn.

If no other employee is available, then the presence of the customer must be acknowledged by such a remark as, "I will be at your service in a moment, Madam"—but only if the purchase which the first customer is making is such that the salesman believes his services will soon be available. This may be safely presumed if the purchase of the present customer is of comparatively small value and does not require much time in its selection.

The third course is to wait upon both customers at once. This, however, can be safely done only when a purchase which demands time and care in making a selection is under consideration. Care must be taken not to neglect one customer in favor of another. But if one customer is inspecting different pieces of dress goods or buying an article which demands careful consideration before a final decision is reached, then an expert salesperson can safely wait upon two or even three customers at once. In such a case a customer often prefers to be left alone in making the choice rather than feel that the

salesperson is expectantly awaiting a final decision. Therefore, by serving two or more customers at the same time the salesperson allows each to make a careful inspection and trial of the stock without in any way hurrying them in the pleasant task of shopping. To please customers is the first consideration of the retail salesperson.

CHAPTER IX

METHODS OF AROUSING INTEREST

The Nature of Interest.—Interest as contrasted with Attention is a more intense concentration upon the more striking or unusual features of the salesman's offering. Contrasted with Desire, Interest is a general state of mind as distinguished from a specific feeling of personal longing. In other words, Interest is the midway stage between Attention and Desire. As attention to the salesman becomes undivided it is already shading into interest in his offering. When the buyer's mind progresses into a tendency to see that the offering is certainly of value to a great many people, interest is well established, and as that general appreciation becomes centered on the value of the offering to oneself the stage of desire is being entered. Our immediate problem is how to lead the prospect from undivided attention to well-established interest that is ready to be focused in personal and specific desire.

The Concentrative Principle.—In arousing interest the salesman must constantly narrow the prospect's field of thought and vision, directing his mind more and more closely to the conclusion, "This is worth My while." The procedure is from the general to the particular; for instance, a wholesale salesman shows an electrician a new electrical appliance, manifestly of advantage to some electricians, in fact of value to a great many, and as the demonstration proceeds the appliance is more and more clearly seen to be of value to this particular electrician. Again, a specialty salesman of aluminum ware on

commencing his sales talk knows that the housewife will grant its value to a great many people. His task is to limit her more and more closely to her own experience and her own welfare, so that instead of thinking how useful this ware would be to everyone else, she is only concerned with its especial and particular usefulness to her own self.

The Means of Concentration.—The closer the attention the more quickly the interest is aroused. An appeal directed to two senses is certainly stronger than an appeal made to but one; attention is less divided if eye and ear are both engaged. Hence the demonstration of an offering is highly desirable. Enthusiasm, too, is indispensable. With these must be combined an adroit judgment that determines which talking points and which aspects of the offering will most surely and directly center the prospect's mind on the value of the offering to himself.

Methods of Demonstration.—The most obvious use of demonstration involves the use of samples that show the goods themselves rendering their services. The special points of superiority can be emphasized by demonstration in a multitude of cases, including many that on first thought do not seem well adapted for such purposes.

A cutlery salesman who calls on the hardware trade invariably introduces himself to a prospect by asking: "May I borrow a short piece of copper wire for a moment, please?" On receiving the wire he opens his sample case, takes out a pair of shears, and cuts the wire in two. Passing the shears over for the merchant's inspection he says: "You notice that they are not marked at all. Now isn't that the kind of shears you want to offer to your trade? It's just a sample of my whole line." Then without any more ado he begins to spread out his line on the retailer's counter.

A utility article can often be demonstrated in one way or another. Foods and drinks also lend themselves readily to such a physical demonstration.

A salesman representing a bakery, after calling a number of times on a provision store dealer without success, determined to try to interest him by a demonstration. On his next visit he took with him a loaf of bread daintily wrapped in a napkin and packed in a collapsible carton with a small jar of honey and a sharp knife. He entered the store just before lunch hour when appetite is at its keenest. Walking to the rear where the proprietor's desk stood, he unpacked the carton on the counter, cut the loaf of bread into thin slices and spread two or three with honey. Handing a slice to the proprietor he said: "I have brought you a nutritious lunch. Just try that bread and tell me if you don't think it's the best flavored loaf you ever tasted." He then passed several slices to the clerks in the store who were unoccupied with customers and asked for their opinions also. He ate two or three slices with huge relish himself and with ejaculations between mouthfuls to the effect, "Isn't this fine?" "Did you ever taste such bread as this?" All agreed that it was indeed very fine bread —the best they'd ever tasted. The impression created by this enthusiastic demonstration gave the salesman the opportunity to talk business that he had previously ineffectually sought.

Demonstration in the Retail Store.—The retail salesman can use similar methods to great advantage. Manufacturers frequently send trained demonstrators to large retail stores to demonstrate a particular article as a means of catching the eye and stimulating the interest of both customers and of persons who are merely looking around. The demand for a novelty, such as a new cosmetic of special virtues, a new song, or anything with a touch of originality is invariably stimulated in this way. These demonstrations are frequently made with

the object of collecting a crowd, but it is just as practical to demonstrate in this way to a single customer.

In the grocery store, for instance, the appeal of almost everything can be accentuated merely by suggesting that the customer taste it. At the perfumery counter perfume can be sprayed on a customer's handkerchief; at the stationery counter the fountain pen salesman can ask his customers to write with a pen, to test the feel of a certain quality of note paper or the tensile strength of commercial writing paper; and so on with a wide variety of goods.

The demonstration method is a practical application of theory. In addition the customer's being told, he is shown what the goods will do. An appeal to the eye is always more potent in its effect than appeal to the ear, and an appeal to the palate is in suitable cases the most powerful appeal of all.

Wearing apparel, books, kitchen utensils, foodstuffs, tools, musical instruments, furniture, machinery, and a number of other commodities lend themselves so naturally to the demonstration method of arousing interest as to need no illustration here.

Special Applications of Demonstration.—Other wares perhaps deserve more extended consideration as suggestive of the possibilities of the demonstrative method.

One wholesale salesman of all kinds of glassware makes a practice as soon as he enters a store in which he is unknown, of buying an ordinary lamp chimney.

"Don't trouble to wrap it up," he says to the proprietor, and picks up the chimney and rolls it along the floor. When it strikes against some object it naturally breaks into pieces. Without a word he takes a chimney from his sample case and puts it to a similar test. His own chimney stands the ordeal without even cracking. He then turns to the astounded prop-

rietor and says, "A lamp chimney which will stand such a severe test as that is the kind that will have a long life and is the kind that keeps your customers satisfied. I'd like, Mr. Blank, to show you my complete line." Such a method naturally interests the prospect and at once brings him to concentrated interest—a wish to see whether he cannot profit by investing in at least some of the kinds of glassware this salesman carries.

An encyclopedia salesman after winning his interview, at once opens the interview by plunging into his actual sales talk with the question, "Mr. Blank, which state in the Union contains the most coal?" The prospect either replies, "Why Pennsylvania, I suppose," or else admits some doubt. The salesman then opens his sample, or prospectus, and says, "Colorado; here is the list of coal-bearing states, showing the analytical report of the leading authorities." From this general demonstration he quickly leads to discussion of topics of special and particular interest to the prospect.

The wholesale salesman of electrical appliances takes an electric iron apart, showing the excellence of construction; a paper salesman clipped an eyelet through a sheet of paper and hung a heavy weight from it, showing the strength of that quality of "bond" stock. A fruit jar salesman lit a piece of paper, dropped it into the jar, and clamped on the lid. While doing so he explained that the contraction of the air, as it cooled would hold the top firmly in place. The paper soon burned out; the lid was firmly held. "Now," the salesman said, "this bit of paper does not produce the heat that hot fruit does, yet notice how even this little heat suffices to hold the lid fast." Trying the lid, the buyer would be surprised and convinced. Naturally sales went up.

Demonstrating Intangible Offerings.—No words of the salesman can emphasize the value of a commodity so effec-

tively as a demonstration. "That is all well enough if one is selling tangible goods," you may say, "but how about selling intangible things such as insurance?" Of course one cannot demonstrate the intangible in precisely the same manner, yet even in such cases it is possible to give a vivid and demonstrative impression.

In selling life insurance a salesman lays a tabulated statement before his prospect, saying, "You were 26 on your last birthday. These figures show exactly what ..... dollars a year will mean to you twenty years from now." The interest aroused is practically that aroused by the demonstration of an article.

In all such cases it is very frequently effective to get the prospect to take part in the demonstration. Get him to work out the profit of an investment for himself. Put a pencil in his hand, dictate the figures to him, let him do the calculations and then check them up. He cannot help taking a very active interest in the process and is consequently being brought into closer contact with the whole proposition.

Diagrams, sketches, photographs, and maps are all of extreme importance in selling not only real estate but in the sale of many other offerings. A jeweler in selling rings exhibits samples but makes sketches as well, so as to determine the precise tastes and interests of his prospect. An advertising salesman who is deft with pencil and brush always carries a sketch pad and water-color box in his pocket and even a small bottle of water. Sitting in a prospect's office he comments on the attractiveness of some feature of the plant, the environs, or the commodity to be advertised. As he speaks he skilfully "lines in" a neat sketch of some detail he mentions. His workmanship is so clean-cut that it invariably elicits surprise and pleasure. Again and again he has sold a customer a label, a poster, a catalog, a cover design for a booklet, or something of the sort before the man has grasped the full force of the transac-

tion. And of course this salesman is far too able to leave the matter at that point. He stays until he has built up absolute confidence in the merits of the sale, refusing to let the enthusiasm of the moment die away into misgiving and doubt.

Enthusiasm.—The preceding example leads to a consideration of the second great factor in arousing interest. Interest in the prospect is a fire that must be well kindled. The salesman's own sincere admiration of his offering and enthusiasm for its use is the match that lights the fire of the prospect's interest. The fuel that keeps that fire burning is the unquestionable worth of the offering. As this worth is seen to be of particular and personal importance to the prospect, the fire is burning with desire as well as interest.

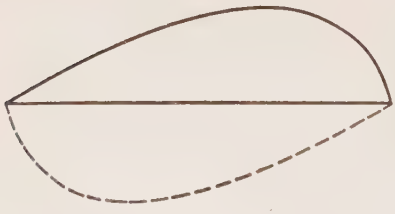
The Salesman's Enthusiasm.—If the salesman's action is apathetic, the prospect's reaction is indifference. If the salesman's action is earnestly enthusiastic, the prospect's reaction is confident interest. If the salesman's action is exaggerated and wildly enthusiastic, the prospect's reaction is skepticism and caution. Accordingly, the amount of earnest enthusiasm with which a salesman presents his offering is some gauge of the amount of interest that the prospect will display.

The retail salesman who gloomily flops a shirt on the counter and then looks away across the store depresses the customer beyond hope. The salesman who dexterously yet quietly lays a shirt on the counter and calls attention to its weave, cut, pattern, and make, with assured fondness for it, is focusing intensely the prospect's interest. "Handle the goods as though you loved them," is an injunction that is common among able sales managers. If the salesman cannot, with all his knowledge of his wares, find qualities to admire and delight in, then the commodities he is selling must be poor indeed.

The Prospect's Enthusiasm.—The feeling of wonder is universal. Some display it more readily than others; some give way to it while others tend to resist it. But it is there in every man, woman, and child. Rouse it and you rouse interest. Furthermore, the instinct of imitation is also strong within most of us. And curiosity co-operates with imitation in helping the salesman to stir wonder and interest.

The salesman who broke the lamp chimney excited curiosity; then by showing the tougher chimney he summoned wonder to his aid; interest was then inevitable. So, too, the salesman of the encyclopedia with his coal question, and the fruit jar man with his burning paper, roused wonder and therefore interest. The advertising man first stirred curiosity with his pencil and paper; wonder at his deftness followed; then came wonder at his skill in utilizing some local detail as a subject for a clever sketch; and finally wonder at his ability in dealing with a topic of personal and immediate value to the prospect. His capture of interest and his dexterity in concentrating it on a particular prospect's needs was based on wonder.

Interest and the Line of Normality.—But wonder and interest tend to die away; once we become familiar with an idea or an object we usually cease to be interested in it unless there are personal reasons. When a person becomes keenly interested he does things that he probably would never think of doing under normal conditions.



The salesman must keep this point in mind when he is exciting a prospect's interest; the emotions that he is stimulating are more and more interfering with the purely logical and

intellectual processes of thought; the prospect is becoming unbalanced.

Let the horizontal line in the diagram represent the prospect's normal state of mind; the condition in which he calmly views and reviews the happenings about him; the mood in which he habitually calculates, reflects, and judges. The curved line above the line of normality represents an exhilarated state of mind. The more pleasantly he is affected the higher the curve ascends. If he is easily excited, the curve ascends more abruptly; if stolid and phlegmatic, more gradually. The curve below the line of normality represents a depressed state of mind, such as results from disappointment or annoyance. In either case, the greater the emotion the greater the distance of the peak from the line of normality. The able salesman, under ordinary conditions, produces a curve of interest or exhilaration above the line; the weak or clumsy or indifferent salesman produces instead a depressed curve.

A poor approach leads downward and the prospect at once begins considering how to get rid of the salesman. True, the prospect may regret his dismissal when he gets back to his normal frame of mind, but the salesman has none the less lost the order.

Or again, the salesman by the sheer force of his enthusiasm may so exhilarate the prospect that he is emotionally carried to the buying point; but as this is effected through the force of emotion rather than reason, the buyer on subsiding to normality will view the purchase from that level and then will entertain doubts of its wisdom. If the exhilaration and enthusiasm resulted from exaggerated statement or undue pressure, the buyer, realizing that he was illogical, will be dissatisfied, and being human will blame the salesman.

Yet this ascendant emotional curve is desirable, for enthusiasm in the prospect is essential. Hence measures must be taken to insure that the buyer look back on the purchase

with satisfaction. In the second diagram shown, note the uprights that have been added. These represent sound reasons for the purchase; they are supported by the normal state of mind. When these are added the buyer can look back at his purchase, admit that he certainly was enthusiastic when he made that purchase, yet likewise perceive willingly enough that his enthusiasm was justified and well founded.

The advertising salesman whose sketches made on the spot secured him enthusiasm was careful, as we have seen, not to leave immediately upon receiving an order, but stayed to build up confidence in that purchase. He ascertained each topic to be used in the advertisement, discussed the various modifications, sketched various modes of treatment, and so established as supports not only particular and detailed sales arguments, but also the confidence of the buyer in the salesman, in the firm he represented, and in their ability to produce what he himself especially desired.

The Relation of the Size of the Sale to the Ascendant Curve.—The greater the amount of money required for the purchase, the less the curve ascends from the line of normality. Buying a $50,000 house is more a matter of logical judgment than inviting a friend or two to join in a glass of orangeade; an emotional impulse can lead to a purchase involving a comparatively small sum, but in larger transactions cool and considered views are habitual.

This use of judgment in important purchases is no drawback; a sale of any significance, as we have seen above, must rest firmly upon a series of substantial reasons. Sometimes this factor proves of marked advantage. For example, a manufacturer plans to build a new factory, the only salesmanship requisite for the real estate agent is in producing the

facts about various lots of land. When the manufacturer gets all the data before him, he analyzes them carefully and decides which he will buy. He is already not only in a buying mood, but he has thought the matter out intellectually as well as emotionally. His decision will be logical and unlikely to give rise to depression or doubt.

Modes of Establishing Personal Interest.—Demonstration and the use of enthusiasm are the foundations of interest; but a general interest is not the aim of the salesman, he needs personal interest, which is an advance still further toward desire. In some cases the first impression of the offering affects this, in others a special effort is needed; in some cases a direct statement of the proposition would produce a depressed curve and the salesman must stir his prospect even to personal interest by other means. In every case the salesman must be prepared through his preapproach and also by his experiences in the opening of the interview to determine promptly and adequately what talking points will most effectively arouse the personal interest of the prospect in the offering.

This latter problem has already been treated in preceding chapters and will be given still further space in the detailed consideration of types of customers that follows later. In the meantime it is needful for us to devote our attention to the modes of establishing personal interest.

The Simple Straightforward Method.—If the sale is of small value, a simple, straightforward sales talk may be all that is needed to arouse interest. The desire for gain, in the wholesale field, or for comfort or recreation or the like, in the specialty field, will prove sufficient without need for special excitement of wonder. For example, the hosiery salesman says to the dry goods merchant: "Good morning, Mr. Brown, I want you to see some of the new patterns in hose we have

just brought out. They're the most attractive colors and shades we have had for many seasons."

The coffee salesman says: "Mr. Brown, I want you to stock our line of coffee because it will be to your interest to do so. You know there is a big repeat demand for our coffee because it pleases the palates of the people who have once tried it on the recommendation of friends or of our advertisements."

When the customer is already acquainted with the goods or knows the salesman, a simple description of his offer is all that is needed. When both goods and salesman are unknown, the customer must be offered something more concrete than words, whether this be samples, a catalog, a picture, or a demonstration.

First Impressions Important.—If one of the features of the article being demonstrated is its daintiness or purity and the sample in use is soiled or damaged, an unfavorable impression will be created which will check any awakening interest. A favorable first impression is extremely important in salesmanship whether it is an impression of the salesman himself or of the thing he has to sell. This is generally recognized when the sale involves a large expenditure but is frequently neglected when the cost is trifling.

When a certain real estate salesman drives a prospect to a house he wishes to sell, he usually approaches from the end of the road which gives the best possible view, even if this necessitates a lengthy detour. An advertising concern engaged in renting billboard space pays particular attention to the important matter of first impressions. The exact spot from which a particular board can be seen to the best advantage is first located. When a prospective advertiser is taken to view the "open" boards, the driver knows to a foot where to stop the automobile. Then and not until then does the salesman point out the board space offered for rent.

The most favorable light for showing the quality of fabrics, paper, and similar goods, should likewise be chosen before the goods are displayed.

Carefulness in Display.—The way in which the goods are handled will convey an impression of quality or inferiority. When the jewelry salesman displays a fine necklace or a diamond ring he holds it up carefully and looks at it admiringly. When he lays it down on the case, it is placed on a velvet pad. The same principle can be applied to ordinary goods. They should be handled carefully, thus implying that they are of value. To toss them carelessly on the counter suggests that they are not worth much. Treat them with the respect you feel for any property of value; show not only understanding but liking and admiration by the way you handle them.

A salesman of bottled pickles has each bottle in his sample case wrapped in a square of velvet. As he takes a sample out of the case he holds it carefully, slowly unwraps the covering, lays it down on the counter, and sets the bottle carefully in its center. His manner suggests the superior quality of the goods and the velvet on which the bottle stands enhances its appearance.

Connecting the Selling Talk with the Prospect's Interest.—When other methods fail, attention can sometimes be transformed into interest by linking the unknown offer with something in which the prospect is interested or with which he is already familiar. The closer the connecting link the better. It may be difficult to connect these interests in a natural way and in that case a purely arbitrary connection is all that is possible.

Specialty salesmen in advertising usually meet with a fair share of rebuffs. Often their greatest difficulty is to secure a

hearing in which they will have time to interest the listener and sometimes must catch him on the wing as it were.

A salesman handling trade paper advertising called on the advertising manager of a large manufacturing concern whom he had failed hitherto to interview. On this occasion he chanced to meet the prospect in the vestibule of the office.

"Mr. Denman," he said, "I was in Wilson's shoe store out in Medland the other day buying a pair of shoes and had some conversation with him regarding your line, which he handles. He told me that you'd built up quite a business in it and I learned what was to me a very interesting fact, that you sell direct to dealers through several branch houses rather than through jobbers. It occurred to me that our publication would be a very profitable medium for you to use for these three reasons: . . ."

The salesman tied up the prospect's welfare with trade paper advertising, although there was but slight connection between the two. This opening was sufficiently interesting to the customer to make him willing to hear what the salesman had to say and thus it gained the opportunity to talk business.

A Name as the Connecting Link.—The connecting link may be only a name or a subject in which the prospect is interested, as in the following examples, yet it may suffice to gain a hearing.

A salesman selling loose-leaf ledgers approached the manager of a manufacturing firm in this way: "Mr. Jones, I understand that you are so interested in modern efficiency methods that you have engaged Mr. Talbot as efficiency engineer. I feel quite sure that you will be especially interested in our system for increasing office efficiency."

A certain insurance salesman after he has obtained the name of a prospect from an existing client invariably opens the conversation with the potential client in this way: "I was talk-

ing the other day with your friend, Mr. Parker, and your name came up in the conversation. I understand from him that you have not yet protected your family against accident to yourself. I feel that under the circumstances you would not object to my submitting a proposition that would fit your needs."

In all these examples the salesman links his offer with somebody or something in which the prospect is already interested, although the connection may be comparatively arbitrary.

Arousing Interest by Appealing to Curiosity.—Curiosity not only helps somewhat in exciting enthusiasm, as has already been pointed out, but is also of use in other methods of dealing with interest. It is frequently used in advertising; the "teaser" advertisements which appear from time to time are examples of attempts to arouse interest in this way. Such advertisements do not describe the thing advertised but tell the reader to watch for other announcements which do so. Such queries as "Do you know what X-Tom is?" "See this space next week"; "Watch this space; it has a message for you"; "$1,000 in gold for some lucky person. See next week's 'Bludgeon'" —these are all teaser advertisements designed to arouse the curiosity of the reader to such a degree that he will be sufficiently interested to investigate further. While this method is rarely applicable to salesmanship, it can, in some cases, be used with good effort.

An Example of an Appeal to Curiosity.—A salesman selling toilet goods to drug stores had tried on several occasions to secure an order from a large store in an important Pacific Coast town. He made repeated attempts to awaken the interest of the buyer, who in this case happened to be the daughter of the proprietor. After several failures he decided to adopt different tactics. The next time he visited the store he approached her hurriedly and, with a smile, said:

"Sorry, I have to catch a train in a few minutes and haven't time to show you a special sample I have with me. I will surely come in and see you again on my next trip and I want you to keep this to remember me by," and he handed her a small souvenir powderpuff. On his next trip he again approached the buyer in the same way, saying: "Too bad, I brought something special to offer you on this trip, but I have positively to catch the 6:15 to Portland and it's only ten minutes to train time. I'll surely give you plenty of time on my next trip."

The salesman took it as a matter of course that the buyer was perfectly willing to inspect his samples and by this time the young lady began to reveal curiosity. When he visited her the third time he had no difficulty in securing permission to show his samples. Her interest had been aroused.

The Flank Approach.—It must be acknowledged that to some customers a certain offer may be very much like a red rag to a bull. The mere mention of the salesman's business is sufficient to cause such an expression of indifference or opposition to appear in the face of the prospect that it subdues the courage of all but the most experienced and pertinacious of salesmen. When approaching a customer known to be antagonistic it may be expedient to advance from the flank as it were, rather than from the front.

Most men are more or less indifferent and some few even antagonistic to the appeal of the life insurance salesman. Furthermore, when a man buys life insurance he, as a rule, prefers to do so from somebody he knows and in whom he has confidence. For this reason many insurance salesmen ask their clients to give them the names of friends with the intention of calling on them. But before mentioning business they frequently make an effort to become acquainted with the prospect and when they succeed limit the conversation to every-day

affairs. Only after they have met casually in this way on several occasions does the life insurance salesman broach the topic in which he is primarily interested. However, this method should be used only when the salesman is assured that the prospect will refuse to discuss insurance with a stranger.

Variations of Flank Approach.—A variation of a flank approach is used by an insurance salesman. When calling on prospects with whom he is unacquainted and when he has not even the name of a mutual friend to use as an introduction, he introduces the subject of *fire* insurance instead of *life* insurance. Fire insurance is a necessity universally recognized. It entails much less expenditure than life insurance and consequently it is broached to more receptive ears. When the salesman finds that the prospect has already protected his property by fire insurance, as is usually the case, he congratulates him on his judgment in choosing a good company and then swings the conversation around to life insurance. This flank approach is frequently much more effective than a more direct method.

The flank approach can be made in a variety of ways. A druggist in a rural community for a long time tried ineffectually to interest the farmers in the outlying country in his veterinary medicines. He equipped an automobile and sent out a salesman with samples, necessary supplies, and instructions to do only a cash trade. The salesman found that he had to face severe competition from so-called "medicine wagons." These made a practice of leaving medicines with the farmer without asking for payment until used and approved. As a result their hold on the business was so strong that he was unable to break in. A consultation followed between the druggist and his salesman and a new method of approach was devised.

On his next trip the salesman carried with him a number of

talking machines, sporting goods, chinaware, and other objects of special interest to the farmer and his family. He then explained to his prospects that by saving coupons given with all goods purchased at the drug store any of these premiums could quickly be secured. Double value in coupons would be given for every cash purchase of a veterinary medicine. In this way interest was readily secured, sales followed, and the druggist adhered to his policy of doing a strictly cash business.

Do Not Make It Easy to Say "No".—No salesman worth his salt will make the mistake of approaching a likely customer with a negative question such as: "You can't use so and so, can you?" The natural answer to such a query is "No." The question, however, need not be put in the negative to invite a negative answer and thereby a refusal of the offer.

For example, "Do you need this?" or "Do you need that?" are phrases frequently heard in retail stores. The obvious answer to such queries as these is "No," and the salesman loses a chance to introduce an additional sale. For instance, a salesman who has just sold some silverware might ask: "Have you any silver polish"; but it would be better still to say: "Our Peerless Silver Polish will preserve the luster of this article indefinitely," or some similar statement. Then whether the answer of the customer is "Yes," or "No," or "I don't know," the salesman can still proceed to introduce his line.

"Can I interest you in the purchase of some aluminum ware?" and "Can I interest you in this set of books?" are openings which invariably receive and deserve a negative reply. "Our new line of aluminum ware you will find the easiest thing to clean and keep bright in your whole kitchen." "This splendid set of books contains all the information any child needs to carry him to the eighth grade." "These cards match the envelope and writing paper perfectly." These are all

forms of definite statement to be preferred to the phrases which invite a rejection.

The Necessity for Unity and Progression.—No matter how attractive a bypath may appear, it is absolutely necessary to stick to the main subject and to press on with the advance from attention to general interest, and finally to particular interest. The comments of the prospect frequently offer tempting material for discussion, but the main logical development of the succession of talking points permits no digression. Objections and suggestions alike must be met in their place, but by no means always at the moment when they are stated. To pause or even to linger in the stream is to get out of the current, the forward movement ceases, the enthusiasm wanes, and the sale is either lost or else an unusual and perhaps exhausting effort is necessary to regain the advantage so foolishly allowed to slip.

An encyclopedia salesman in showing his prospectus to teachers found that certain pictures tended to stimulate comment and anecdote from them. Out of courtesy he had to listen, and soon found that they would be so interested in their own views and experiences that they had lost interest in the proposition. He wisely stopped showing that picture. Retail salesmen find the chatty type of customer difficult to deal with; they talk themselves out of buying, so to speak. The salesman, too, may talk his prospects out of buying, for interest is only sustained by progressive development of additional features, each more personally effective than the last. To spend much time on general topics of interest is to lessen instead of increase interest in the salesman's offering.

CHAPTER X

INTERESTING THE RETAIL CUSTOMER

The Problem of the Retail Salesperson.—Retail salespersons are not faced with the same problem as salesmen on the road and therefore do not require the same completeness of preparation in the construction of sales arguments. Yet they need to study means and methods of arousing interest in the wares they handle. It is true that the majority of shoppers enter the store with preconceived ideas as to what they want. But their attention can frequently be drawn to goods other than those requested; sometimes it may be desirable to call attention to another brand of better value than the one asked for; methods must be developed for fixing the wandering attention of those who are merely looking around; and finally the art of displaying and describing goods must be practiced with the object of creating and strengthening interest.

The Attitude of the Salesperson Must be Positive.—To win and increase this interest the salesperson should be positive and enthusiastic when describing the merchandise. The general attitude of employees in many retail stores is negative or passive. The article asked for is procured; it is apathetically placed on the counter, and little or no attempt is made either to help the customer to a final decision, when choice enters into the transaction, or to sell something in addition to the original purchase. The clerk's presumption is that the shopper, especially if he is a man, knows his own mind and that to seek to influence him in any way may be to court his displeasure, if not a rebuff.

It is, however, wholly unnecessary to importune a customer to buy. A higher priced article or additional merchandise will often be bought if the salesperson reveals a little enterprise. The fact that customers want to look at certain goods or are in the store making a tour of inspection, implies a willingness to be interested if any special merchandise is brought to their attention. The tactful salesperson presumes that they will be glad to hear about the qualities or special features of any goods they may be inspecting.

Methods of Interesting the Shopper.—Suppose, for instance, a man has just bought some shirts in a men's furnishing store and while waiting for the parcel looks with interest at a display of ties suspended on a rack. It is then quite permissible to pick up the end of one and say, "This is pure silk—it will retain its luster." As the customer's gaze is transferred to another style the remark may be made, "This is made of a new material which does not wrinkle easily as the ordinary tie does." The action can then be suited to the word by squeezing the end of the tie in the fingers and showing that little or no impression is left upon the silk. When hats are under inspection the remark might be, "The shade of this hat is unusually smart and would go particularly well with the suit you are wearing"; or when trying on a suit, "This is the new close-fitting style which is now so fashionable. Note also the finish in the lining of this coat . . . " with other remarks of a similar nature.

Positive statements which are comments on style, quality, and value may be made in the course of every retail sale. If in addition some interesting facts can be mentioned about the material or about the purchase itself, if it happens to be particularly good value, so much the better. Such remarks direct attention to the good points and tend to keep the mind from dwelling upon and exaggerating the less attractive features.

Consider, for example, the sale of a lady's suit. Should little or nothing be said about the good features of the wearing apparel, the customer's first thought might be that she did not like the belt attached to it, or that it was not exactly the shade of color she wanted, or any one of half a dozen objections to the particular garment might come to mind. It must be remembered that customers are invariably ready to look for defects and to criticize. Positive remarks help to direct the thought to the attractive features of the purchase. The sale is not necessarily lost if that particular coat is not bought; but the more skilfully the customer's requirements can be gauged and the desirability accentuated of the article that is tried on, the sooner is she satisfied. The skill and efficiency of the saleswoman are revealed by her ability to satisfy customers quickly. As the number of persons whom she serves during the day increases or as the amount she sells to each customer grows larger, the lower becomes the percentage of her selling cost.

Selling Additional Goods.—The retail salesperson should seek every opportunity to suggest tactfully one or more additional purchases. If the store does not stock the particular thing desired, the obvious course is to suggest something else. The management may wish, moreover, to close out a certain line of goods; or an exceptionally advantageous lot of goods may have been secured which can be sold at a reduction to the advantage of both the store and the customer. The first purchase may indicate others to be suggested; upon selling a shirt the salesman mentions collars, neckties, and the like. The salesman may suggest commodities that are appropriate to the season. All these are reasons for suggesting the purchase of something in addition to the article asked for.

Superiority only Claimed upon Proof.—When a brand that is requested cannot be supplied and a substitute must be

proffered, no claim for superiority should be made unless this can readily be upheld. For instance, a customer in a drug store asks for a certain cough syrup. The store does not keep it, so the salesman without a word brings out a medicine which resembles it in its ingredients and price. "I am sorry we haven't the particular syrup you want," he says, "but I can give you this Chery Cough Syrup which we think is very efficacious because . . .," and here he gives the reasons why.

When it can truthfully be affirmed that the article offered is better than the one asked for, reasons for the superiority should be given; otherwise no comparison should be made. Nothing arouses mistrust or incredulity more rapidly than comparative and superlative assertions which are unaccompanied by any proof. Nothing is more convincing than a claim of superiority when supported by definite reasons which appeal to common sense and experience.

As an example, a customer asks for a cigar which is not kept in stock. The salesman immediately hands out another brand sold at the same price and of about the same strength and size. "We do not keep that cigar," he says, "but this one which is the same price and the same strength is in our opinion a smoother smoking cigar. We stock it in preference to the other, because, having opened both cigars and compared them, we find the filler of this to be of a much more even grade of tobacco." Or if the salesman cannot substantiate what he says he might reply, "I am sorry, we do not have that cigar, but you might try this; it is very much like the one you ask for and is the same size and price."

When offering an alternative choice it is desirable not to use the phrase, "This is just as good." These words are the stock formula of the dealer who practices substitution for his own profit; for this reason they are to be avoided.

Selling Another Brand Without Substitution.—When it is the sales policy of the store to introduce a new brand or

to sell an unadvertised article in preference to one that is advertised, the substitution should be made openly and aboveboard. The new product ought to be sold on its merits with a suggestion, if the customer adheres to the first choice, that both brands be tried side by side.

For example, a drug store wishes to push its own brand of cough syrup. A customer asks for another make. While wrapping up the one called for the salesman may say, "Have you tried this cough syrup before?" If the customer replies in the affirmative this affords an opportunity to suggest a trial of the store's own remedy, because all coughs are not alike. If the customer's answer is that he has never tried the syrup and is doing so on the recommendation of somebody else, the sales talk might be: "Sometimes coughs are difficult to cure. If you find that this bottle fails in its effect, as coughs are not all alike and require different medicines, we'd be glad to have you try our brand of so and so"—with other reasons for its trial.

A customer in a grocery asks for a certain brand of canned corn. As the salesman procures it and places it before her, if the purchaser is a regular customer, he remarks, "We have a new brand called the 'Glow of the West' which we feel we can recommend in every way. I would like to have you try it and let us have your opinion."

These methods of introducing different articles inspire confidence in the salesman's knowledge and ability and make it comparatively easy for him to effect the substitution he desires—either at the present time or when the next purchase is made. The evident willingness to supply the thing requested removes any question as to the motive in suggesting the change. Under no circumstances should the desirability of purchasing a substitute be mentioned until the article first requested has been placed in front of the customer—otherwise the natural thought is that the salesman is seeking to sell something from a motive of self-interest. Distrust is then at once aroused.

The Customer Who Is "Just Looking Around."—In every big department store and in many of secondary size, customers like to look around merely for the pleasure of gazing upon the interesting and charming things displayed. If they discover something which seems a particular bargain or is suitable as a gift they may buy it. In many cases the main object is to while away an idle half-hour.

When the salesman approaches a customer who signifies that she does not care to be shown anything and that she simply wishes to look around, he should discreetly withdraw still keeping his eyes upon her while she is in his department. The customer must not know that she is being watched or that the salesman is waiting for an opportunity to approach her if she inspects or reveals any interest in a particular article, otherwise she will either leave the store or refrain from showing interest in anything.

When, however, a lengthy pause before a particular display indicates that her interest has been definitely attracted the salesman can then approach her with the object of serving her in some way. Her interest has now been awakened and the salesman's task is to strengthen it.

If, for instance, she is examining a showcase containing handbags, he would, of course, not say, "Do you want a handbag, Madam?" as the probable reply would be "No" and the customer would leave the store feeling that she had been unduly pressed to buy. He might, however, tactfully comment upon the handbags in this way: "You will be interested to know, Madam, that these are the new 'sack' designs which are so popular just now." Positive remarks such as these about the goods either strengthen the interest which the customer shows when she pauses to inspect a particular article; or if she has little interest in the thing she is inspecting, a positive remark of this nature may induce her either to examine it more closely or to mention something else she is seeking.

Avoid Asking Many Questions.—Having considered a few of the methods by which the salesman increases the interest of the retail shopper in what he has to offer, let us now consider a few things he must not do if he is to avoid nipping this interest in the bud.

Many people object to any questions at the beginning of a sale; they rely on the salesperson's judgment to a much greater extent than is realized. When asked a number of questions the natural thought of the buyer is that the salesperson does not understand what is wanted and therefore cannot be of much help in making a choice. Especially is this the case with the woman shopper. This feeling naturally destroys her confidence in the salesman's ability and to this extent injures the possibility of making a sale.

Imagine, for instance, what would be the effect on a customer buying a pair of gloves if she were put through the following catechism:

"Do you want them long or short?"

"Short."

"What kind of gloves do you want?"

"Kid."

"What color do you want?"

"Gray."

"What size do you want?"

"Six."

"About how much did you want to pay?"

The crudity of asking questions is evident. Yet many retail salesmen seek information in this clumsy manner before they turn to their shelves and stock in search of the desired article. After several queries the impatient or nervous type of retail customer is very likely to reply, "Never mind, I don't think I will bother about them today," and leaves the store in search of more intelligent service.

The salesman must remember that customers do not always

know exactly what they want. A woman may need a pair of gloves without having definitely made up her mind as to the kind, the quality, or the color. She simply knows that she wants a pair and wishes to see what the store has to offer before making a choice. Even if she has decided upon a particular color and style she may like to inspect others so as to see if there is anything she likes better.

A safe rule is that no more than one or on special occasions perhaps two questions shall be asked at the opening of a sale. For example, if a garment is being bought the question may be, "Have you any preference as to color?"—or a similar query in order to give the salesman a lead as to the customer's taste. Never should the query be put, "What price do you want to pay?" And this leads to the discussion of another of the little "don'ts."

Avoid Mentioning Prices.—Every flourishing business, big or little, is built upon satisfaction and the repeat orders which follow. The object of the retail salesman is to sell goods that are not only pleasing to the eye but that will prove equally satisfactory in use. The aim of the shopper is usually to get the biggest value for money. Sometimes the customer determines before entering a store not to spend more than a certain sum regardless of whether or not good value can be obtained for the price. Consequently it is always poor diplomacy for the salesman to ask his customer to name a price if the subject is not broached by the customer. When price is not mentioned the presumption is that quality is desired, quality being reflected in the article's giving satisfaction in wear or in the superiority of its appearance. The salesman's aim is to sell what he thinks is the best quality of goods that the customer can afford.

Many a customer on leaving the store thinks the price of a purchase high; but when the well-made good-quality article is

put to the test of daily wear, price is forgotten in the satisfaction afforded by quality and appearance. Only the satisfied customer returns with a repeat order. So long as there is a reasonable certainty that customers will remain satisfied with their purchases after they leave, it is immaterial whether the price be more or less than the purchaser expected to pay. To ask what priced goods to display frequently makes it impossible to sell quality wares.

For example, a customer comes into a store with the intention of paying $30 for a suit of clothes and he is shown one valued at $35 and another at $40; or a man intends to buy a cheap pocketknife costing 50 cents and he is offered one worth $1. When the query is raised as to the price he wishes to pay he probably names the minimum figure at which he hopes to buy what he needs. When once the cheaper figure is mentioned something at that price must be shown and the opportunity of selling something of better quality at the customer's contemplated *maximum* price is lost. Incidentally customers do not always know exactly what the thing they need is worth and what price they should pay. A man may have an indefinite idea of spending $30 for a suit of clothes and yet be perfectly willing to pay $40 or more if he is offered something that especially pleases him.

Finding the Price Limit.—To choose goods suitable for the customer's pocket is a matter of judgment. A suit of clothes, for example, may range from $20 to $120; pocketknives sell from 25 cents to $5 each. It is natural to size up the customer and estimate what he can afford to pay for the article in question if the purchase is for anything more than a trifling amount. He is then shown something a little higher in price than the minimum he would normally ask for.

When it is impossible to gauge with any accuracy how much a customer expects to pay, the figure can be ascertained

approximately by showing goods at several prices. The advantage of doing this is that it permits values to be contrasted and thus arouses interest in the value of the higher priced goods. The customer's manner will indicate when the price limit has been reached.

Salespeople who study their goods and are acquainted with their selling points will frequently be able to sell goods higher in price than those called for. To do this they must display a variety of articles, explain their merits, and seek by means of demonstration and descriptive sales talk to sell that which will give the most satisfaction, even if the price is higher than the customer expects to pay.

Show the Larger Size of Packages.—For the same reason that goods of the best quality are always shown to a suitable customer, when a product is sold in different sized packages the large size should be offered when no price is mentioned. These large sizes invariably represent better values and in some cases offer an economy of as much as 50 per cent. Often a customer does not know in what size an article is packed; in this case if a query is put as to the quantity desired the smaller package may be chosen where otherwise the sale of a large one can be made. When a small-sized package is asked for this should promptly be placed before the customer, and then the fact can be mentioned that a larger package costing so much represents much better value and is a real economy in the end. This discussion of the size of the package leads to another little "don't" relating to sizes.

Avoid Telling Size.—In selling shoes, gloves, or other articles of wear which are fitted to the customer, so far as possible all questions relating to the size should be avoided. Many women shoppers have peculiar ideas about sizes, especially those of shoes and gloves, and will insist upon buying a cer-

tain size, if it is once specified, regardless of fit and comfort. Many men forget the size worn and do not want to be worried with such a detail. By measuring the hand or the foot, in preference to asking what size is desired, unnecessary discussion is avoided. Incidentally such a method gives the customer more confidence in the ability of the salesperson.

Handling the Indifferent Friend of the Customer.—It sometimes happens that the customer will be accompanied by a friend whose comments and criticisms prove an obstacle to the sale. In dealing with such a situation the salesman must always remember that the sale is being made to the customer and not to her companion; accordingly the actual customer's views must be met, her interest stimulated, her taste considered, her wishes carried out. If the companion makes a suggestion or an objection the salesman should pass over it with a slight though courteous recognition unless the customer clearly concurs in the opinion expressed.

For example, a salesman of silks was interrupted by a customer's companion, who remarked, "Don't you think that the orange would be better than that jonquil shade?" "Many people admire the orange, Madam," replied the salesman, "but we find the jonquil is quite as popular." The reply was pleasantly made, but the salesman did not lay down the jonquil silk or even look at the orange; he kept his attention directed upon the customer and kept hers on the silk in which she had expressed an interest. But the friend was not satisfied. "Well," she continued, "I don't think I'd get that if I were you, it seems to be rather poor quality to me." The customer meanwhile had been examining the jonquil silk without evincing any marked attention to the opinion of her friend, so the salesman simply and easily draped the silk over the customer's arm and said, "It will make up charmingly, won't it?" By his manner he showed that he was not contemptuously or timidly avoiding

the criticism of the customer's friend and yet he also made it plain that he was waiting on the customer, ready to deal with the objection in case she cared to indicate an interest in the question of the quality of the silk.

The General Attitude of the Retail Salesperson.—The attitude of many retail salespeople toward their customers is apathetic and indifferent. They lack enthusiasm in their work and this lack is largely due to ignorance of the attractive features of their goods. They do not study their merchandise from the viewpoint of describing it in terms which will appeal. As they are not interested in these finer details they cannot hope to arouse much interest in the mind of the shopper. Before we can interest others we must reveal interest ourselves. When this interest is really earnest and sincere it shows itself as enthusiasm. The enthusiastic conviction of the salesperson can transform apathetic and diffused interest in a particular article into the desire to buy.

CHAPTER XI

METHODS OF CREATING DESIRE

The Nature of Desire.—As general interest is changed to specific interest, desire begins to appear. This stage of the mental journey passes through a more or less gradual development from the point of specific interest to that where the desire has become so full and strong as to lead into action. In other words, at the close of this section of the journey the service rendered by the commodity appears to the prospect to offer him a greater value than the money asked in exchange for it.

For example, a prospect who is being interviewed by a salesman of an encyclopedia is from the start ready to admit that the work is of unquestionable value to a great many people. As his interest is roused he also admits that this particular work is of unusual value to people in general and then that it is likewise of real value to him, provided that he had the time, or the money, or the frequent occasion, or the kind of family, and so on, that would make such a work practically purchasable. At this point his interest has become specific and desire is near at hand. When he realizes how much definite information and aid the work contains that has a direct bearing on his business and social life, on the education of his children, and on the literary and social activities of his wife—in short, the constant helpfulness of the encyclopedia to every member of his family—he reaches the state of mind in which he begins to feel that the money will bring him better returns through investment in this work than in any other use that he can

think of. Now desire is fully established; the commodity's service appears to him of greater value than the price asked.

Convertible versus Inconvertible Assets.—But this stage is not always easily reached. Money is convertible at the shortest notice into practically any form of service; it is what is known as a "liquid" asset. Commodities, on the other hand, are for the most part practically inconvertible except at a very considerable loss. A man pays for an automobile, gets into it, and drives away; by the time he has gone a few hundred yards the car cannot be converted into the sum he has just paid for it, although its condition is perfect. Again, a piece of real estate may have increased in value unquestionably since it was bought, yet the possibility of immediately converting it into cash depends on many factors not under the owner's control. Months may elapse, money must be spent for advertising, possibly also for commissions, and for other items as well. Furthermore, such commodities as clothing, furniture, tools, books, and the like will bring little more than a nominal sum. Hence most business men and women show a natural hesitancy in spending, as once they have converted a sum into some other form of value their property has lost its easy convertibility.

The Salesman's Requisites for Creating Desire.—To create desire the salesman must prove clearly and simply that the offering will render a more valuable service to the purchaser than the sum to be paid for it. He must be specific, stating and demonstrating just what that offering will do for that particular prospect. As we have seen, statements of its worth in general does no more than arouse a general interest, some degrees removed from full desire.

But the salesman's ability to accomplish so definite a task rests upon accurate, clearly defined knowledge both of the commodity and of the prospect. His knowledge of his goods must

include their uses as well as their make-up. He must also have an appreciation of the manner in which the particular prospect he is interviewing will require the goods to serve him.

Knowledge of the Offering.—The necessary knowledge of his goods can only be acquired through detailed study from the buyer's various points of view as well as from those of the manufacturer and the distributer. He must understand what qualities and characteristics a customer is likely to demand; he must know how those requirements are met and why they are met in that manner. The salesman must recognize that the standards of values as the customer estimates them will vary from the standards of the maker and the merchant. And always he must possess so much knowledge and insight that he sees the reasons for these varying and sometimes opposing views; without comprehending the reasons he cannot expect to meet the inquiries and objections, nor can he decide what means will best create personal and strong desire.

Knowledge of the Customer.—The types of customers are so numerous and so important that they are discussed at length in later chapters. For the present it must suffice for us to recognize that to create personal longing for an offering the salesman must inevitably get contact with the personality, must appeal not merely to the common and general instinctive tendencies but to the special phases that he discovers in this individual with whom he is concerned. As has been pointed out in the chapter on the preapproach, every piece of information that can be secured regarding a prospect is of importance in preparing the appeals that shall most directly and effectively influence him. The customer must not only feel but perceive that his welfare is a matter of concern to the salesman, that the salesman is working in his especial and peculiar interests, and that the offering will serve him with admirable fitness.

The Salesman as Assistant to the Buyer.—Indeed it is the duty and the function of the salesman to assist the prospect in buying. He has no right to urge a purchase that will not be of benefit to the prospect. He co-operates with the prospect in selecting the commodity, determining the quantity and the quality, the time of delivery, mode of payment, use of the commodity, and so on. He is an expert, a professional adviser, acting as a lawyer or a doctor does, in the interest of his client; failure to do so is to injure the standing of himself and his firm and of business in general; worse still, he is extremely likely to injury or at least vex the prospect. This principle of sound business has been recognized and practiced for generations by the outstanding merchants, bankers, and manufacturers of the world. It has been manifest from the beginning of commercial enterprise that a reputation for fair and square dealing is fundamental; that the man who sells solely for his own immediate gain, without thought of his customer's gain as well, is doomed to isolation and failure.

Examples are hardly necessary except to show cases of prompt and discriminating helpfulness. A woman entered a hardware store and looked along the counter somewhat undecidedly yet in obvious search for some article. As the salesman came toward her she asked for a hammer. The first of the salesman's acts as assistant buyer was to recognize that she intended to use the hammer herself; by avoiding the question, "What sort of hammer?" he was avoiding the danger of increasing doubt or hesitation. His next act of assistance was to place before her two hammers, one a light-weight upholsterer's hammer, the other still lighter for using on tacks and small nails. As she picked up the tack hammer he inquired, "Are you interested in upholstering?" Here he helped by not forcing the decision and yet showed an interest in the customer's line of thought, with a question that would call for a reply that would almost certainly indicate just the tool that

would be most desirable. "Why, not exactly," was the answer, "but I do hope to re-cover a chair before very long, and this hammer (indicating the upholsterer's hammer) seems as if it might be what I want." "It is useful for all sorts of light work," said the salesman, "for the head is just right whether you wish to drive a good-sized nail or tack or fine brads. The tool is so nicely balanced, that as you hold it the hammer almost swings itself with practically no effort to lift it or to strike with it. The people who make that know the importance of correct balance. And if you wish to draw a tack or a nail this claw is just the thing." By this explanation he made the prospect see how well adapted the article was for her use. The tool was an upholsterer's hammer, but if he had called it by that name he might have given her the idea that it demanded a trained hand.

The wholesale salesman is often expected to act as adviser and assistant buyer. In dealing with retailers, especially small storekeepers, the salesman estimates the amount of stock the retailer should carry in each of his offerings and takes care to prevent him from ordering too little or too much. He also can assist by suggesting window decorations, by acquainting the merchant with new methods of attracting trade, and by planning or otherwise helping in the solution of some of the retail man's problems. Wholesale firms in many lines find that this spirit is absolutely necessary if they are to secure repeat orders. Paper jobbers and manufacturers act as expert advisers to publishers and printers who call them to help in determining what quality of paper to use for a given purpose, when to order it, what specifications to draw up in giving the order, what methods of packing and shipment to use when sending out the finished product, and so on. Not one of these points is strictly within the selling functions of the mere order taker. But every one of them is a normal function of a successful salesman.

This aspect of salesmanship is still more evident in certain lines of specialty selling. The firms that handle fire, automobile, and theft insurance provide service of several kinds in addition to supplying insurance; their advice and help in renewing, changing, or modifying policies is regarded as a part of their every-day work. Advertising firms frequently take over the whole responsibility of planning, preparing, printing, and mailing circulars and other publicity, so that the customer perhaps does little more than confer with his advertising man and outline his general wishes for, say, a new catalog. And that is the last of the matter as far as the customer is concerned; he may not even see a proof or a sample, relying entirely upon the skill and care of the house to whom the order is given. This case is extreme but by no means unheard of. The salesmen of brushes who have established themselves in a definite territory and make from two to four calls a year build up the housewife's interest and desire through helpful suggestions and through showing that they wish to sell only such brushes as are of direct and immediate usefulness.

Finally, in all three fields of salesmanship—wholesale, specialty, and retail—the salesman must be prepared to forego the sale provided that the best interest of the prospect require this sacrifice. A prudent exercise of self-denial helps immensely in building up confidence and reliance. For instance, a salesman of men's clothing in a department store said to a customer whom he had sold on several previous occasions, "Mr. Clark, we haven't what you want and are not likely to, as our stock has just been replenished. You want a heavy homespun, and though this line of tweeds is an unusual value in much the same line, yet I can understand that you would be disappointed if you bought one of them. Now over at So-and-So's they are carrying a new lot of homespuns that would probably suit you." The suggestion was accepted, and the homespun suit at So-and-So's proved to be just what was wanted. But

the customer has retained his habit of going to the department store salesman, for his trust in the fairness and good judgment of that salesman is stronger than ever. In this same store a woman bought some material for heavy draperies and then inquired whether the drapery material would also make a suitable covering for a window seat. The salesman assured that it would and then she said "I should have a cushion as well for that seat. Do you make them?" "Yes, Madam," replied the salesman, "the upholstery department makes a specialty of that kind of work." "On thinking about it," continued the woman, "I suppose that I could make the cover of the cushion and even the cushion itself if I had the padding. Do you sell the padding material?" "No, Madam," said the salesman, "we do not. We can get it for you if you like, or you can get it direct from the Dash and Dash Felt Company, on Fall Street." "Why, I know a member of the firm," exclaimed the customer, "Thank you, that is just what I will do, and as soon as I have the measurements I will come in and get the material for the cover. Do you think that you will have this material in stock for a week or two longer?" "Yes, Madam, it is a pattern that we shall carry for some months." The incident is not extraordinary, it represents a typical situation handled for the customer's interest to the satisfaction of all concerned.

Willingness to help, to render service without direct compensation, is the keynote of big business and is becoming more and more prevalent in all kinds of business, both large and small.

Suggestive versus Extended Argument.—At times a suggestion to buy is sufficient and at others a full presentation of the reasons must be given. When the prospect is already familiar with the offering and admits its serviceability, the salesman should waste no time in argument but should suggest its purchase at once. Lack of familiarity with the commodity or with

its usefulness and significance to the prospect requires persuasive treatment but demands more especially the application of conviction, that is, the positive and logical reasons for purchase. The method is illustrated at the close of the following chapter.

Avoid Mentioning Competitors.—The argument can rarely if ever be strengthened by mentioning a competitor's business.

A farmer entered a general country store and asked the price of an incubator. The salesman named the figure and wishing perhaps to display a little affability, added, "That's cheaper than you could buy it from a mail-order house."

"I bet you it isn't," replied the customer.

The salesman contended that the incubator he was offering could not be bought for less anywhere. A rather heated discussion followed. The farmer left with the determination to prove the price of the mail-order house was lower. A few hours later he returned in triumph with a catalog and the salesman was compelled to admit that his statement was incorrect.

This incident illustrates the folly of mentioning competition unless the customer himself broaches the subject. A comparison of values may never occur to the mind of the buyer unless the idea is suggested. Only when the customer himself alludes to competing goods is the salesman entitled to assume that they exist. He can then make definite comparisons between his wares and those of a competitor. In doing this, however, he should avoid making disparaging statements—termed "knocking" in the vernacular of salesmanship. Quite naturally business men or retail shoppers always suspect the salesman who tries to belittle competing goods in order to enhance the value of his own. In doing this he is obviously prompted by self-interest, so that the statement is bound to be discounted.

A furniture salesman replied to a buyer who had just

explained that a certain order had gone to a competitor, "Why, their chairs will fall to pieces in six months!" Such a tactless observation as this reflected on the judgment of the buyer. Besides, it was obviously made from an interested motive, and it was just as obviously exaggerated. The buyer knew that the firm he was dealing with merited his confidence and so the salesman lost all chance of any further business in that quarter.

When Comparisons Are Permissible.—There is an important difference between "knocking" and making fair comparisons. When the customer first alludes to competing goods the salesman's aim should be to show the points of superiority in his own, rather than to show that his competitor's are of poor or inferior quality. He can cheerfully admit that the competing goods have points in their favor, but at the same time he takes care to show the superior merits of his own.

Thus when the farmer stated that he could buy more cheaply from the mail-order house, the salesman might have replied, "Yes, that may be possible, but if you do make a bit of a saving, is it worth the trouble? First you have to write out an order, and then wait and wait for the thing to come, and when it does arrive it may be battered or broken in transit. Then you will have the trouble of writing to straighten out the matter—in fact with many mail-order transactions there's all sorts of trouble.

"Now when you buy an incubator from us you see it right here on the floor. You can inspect every inch of it and refuse it if there's a scratch anywhere on it. It's delivered to you the same afternoon and you know that if anything goes wrong with it, we are right here and always ready to make good without delay."

This is an example of the skilful use of comparative statements. A trifling advantage in price is contrasted with the more definite advantages of buying locally rather than from a

mail-order house, and the comparison is so handled that it is in no way disparaging to the goods sold through the mail. The attention of the buyer is switched from the goods, which are almost identical in value, to the service rendered by the local firm and to the certainty that his purchase will prove satisfactory in every way.

Thus when the customer makes a direct comparison which indicates that in his opinion competing goods offer advantages not included in those before him, the salesman as a rule can offset any features in favor of a rival's merchandise with one or two points that are favorable to his own. The better policy is always to acknowledge a superiority in a competitor's goods, if the salesman himself is convinced of this superiority. Having acknowledged the worth of a competitor, the value of the claims made for his own goods will be greatly enhanced.

Competition May be Mentioned When Expected.—When a customer after listening to the salesman's argument affirms that the price is high, and seems reluctant to place an order, the inference may safely be drawn that he is mentally comparing the goods before him with those of a competing house—if competition is to be expected. In such a case general reference to the subject may be made without specific mention of any one competitor.

For instance, a salesman offering a filing cabinet to a prospect whom he knows to be considering various devices with a view to economical selection, might remark, "Our cabinets combine every convenience that a filing cabinet can possibly give. A filing cabinet is not a complicated piece of mechanism. There are several good makes on the market. We do not claim that ours possesses any special advantage over others. But we do claim that our manufacturing facilities and our large volume of trade enable us to offer you a lower priced cabinet which, when quality and price are considered, cannot be

equaled by any other house." He then supports his claim with figures as to sales, and he mentions the names of well-known firms that use the filing cabinets.

If at this point the customer mentions some special feature of a competitive cabinet, such as a temporary filing drawer, which is not included in the salesman's office equipment, the reply might be made, "Yes, I admit that this is sometimes useful, but just notice the convenience of this, . . ." and then the salesman points out any advantages his own product may possess over those with which the buyer has made a comparison. When selling in a competitive field where such comparisons are likely to be made, part of the salesman's preparatory work is the study of competitive goods.

The importance of making clear-cut comparisons rather than vague, disparaging comments is fully appreciated by salesmen who handles specialties. The adding machine, the typewriter, or the check protector salesman who finds another machine in a prospect's office, boldly places his own product at the side of a competitor's and then shows in detail just what his machine can do that the other cannot. He points out any superiorities in construction which his machine may have. He compares the finish, if this is advisable. He makes comparisons that are definite and fair about things which the prospect can see for himself, so that the truth is self-evident.

Let the Customer Handle the Goods.—When the customer can be made to handle the goods he thus proves for himself that the article, machine, or instrument will do what the salesman says it will do. In many cases a personal demonstration is the best of all methods of arousing desire. This point has been noted in connection with methods of arousing interest in the preceding chapters. The clothing salesman requests the customer to remove his coat so that the garment can be tried on and its appearance studied in the glass. The

adding machine salesman asks his prospect to test the rapidity with which work can be done by adding and checking up some of his own accounts. The retail salesman in a hardware store, when a customer asks for a screw-driver, demonstrates how easy it is to drive in screws by using a tool with a spiral revolving handle and asks the customer to try it out for himself on a board specially provided for the purpose. In most cases the customer needs only to make the demonstration for himself to be convinced that the article is well worth the price.

Securing the Customer's Assent to Claims.—Every sales talk includes a certain number of claims as to the merits or advantages of an offer. If the customer is to be impressed with the value he must be brought to assent to these claims and assertions. This is particularly true when an assertion is made which is in any way open to question, or which through lack of proof tends to product skepticism. Unless this mental assent, either tacit or verbal, is secured for every claim or assertion made, when the time comes to close the sale the customer may turn round and state that for certain reasons the offer is not advantageous. The difficulty of closing the sale will be greatly increased unless the salesman not only removes all doubts and fears from the buyer's mind, but replaces these with positive belief in the truth of claims and statements which have been made.

In arriving at this mental assent the attitude of trying to drive the customer into a corner by the sweeping force of the argument should be carefully avoided. Rather should the salesman's manner reveal a sincere desire to reach a reasonable basis of agreement. Thus a statement or claim which is obvious and appeals to common sense can be put in the form of a query, so as to elicit from the customer the reply, "That is so." If the query results in a negative answer and there is no further proof to offer in support of the claim, then it must

be modified until the customer is willing to admit it as a truth. But admit its truth in one form or another the customer must.

How to Build Up a Strong Claim Step by Step.—A strong claim or even sweeping assertion, which at first view the customer would be inclined to deny hotly, can often be made with safety, if it is deliberately built up step by step. A cash register salesman, for example, might assert to a retailer employing a dozen or more salespeople that in the course of a year he loses at least $1,000 because he is not equipped with an up-to-date cash register system. In every case such a statement would be flatly contradicted. So he secures assent to the assertion in this way:

"A general proposition, Mr. Jones, is that no matter how careful the storekeeper and his clerks may be, they are only human and are likely to make mistakes. Any system that is dependent upon human memory is open to mistakes. This you agree with, do you not?"

No one can contradict this general statement and the storekeeper readily admits its truth.

"Now, Mr. Jones," the salesman continues, "considering that to err is human, isn't it possible that such errors occur in *your* store to the amount of a *few* cents a day?"

Mr. Jones is compelled to admit that such errors *do* sometimes occur and he has known them to occur in *his* store.

"Then, Mr. Jones, you discover those losses *sometimes*. Couldn't they sometimes happen *without your discovering them?*"

Mr. Jones is again compelled to admit that this may be the case.

"Now, Mr. Jones, if this could occur sometimes without your knowing it, then why couldn't it happen many times and you never suspect it? How do you know that it doesn't *happen every day?* In short how do you know that you are not

losing a large sum every year because you are not equipped with an up-to-date cash register system?"

This is a perfectly logical climax. Hardly any dealer can dodge this last question or fail to be impressed by the statement, because he has been compelled to admit the truth of all the premises. As before mentioned, when the time arrives to close the sale, success will depend largely upon whether the customer has mentally admitted to himself that the offer includes all the advantages claimed for it. Unless the customer can be made to see these advantages as the salesman sees them and to acknowledge that he believes in them, he may apparently be listening to the argument and at the same time be actually churning over in his mind reasons why he should not buy; sooner or later these will find expression. By pinning the prospect's mind down to an acknowledgment of the claims made, one by one, the salesman gradually carries him along the mental journey that leads away from objections to the buying point.

The Time for Silence.—There is a time to be silent as well as to talk—even in salesmanship. The salesman who thinks that he must do most of the talking and that he is winning over his customer only when he hears the sound of his own voice, greatly injures his chance of making a sale. He should guard against presuming to give advice to a customer who neither asks for it nor wants it, and above all, advice of a technical nature to the man who undoubtedly knows his own business much better than the salesman.

The representative of a lithographing house called on the advertising manager of a large company to show several samples and designs suitable for advertising show cards. He opened the interview in this way:

"We do work for the Star Packing Company, the Able Biscuit Company, and other large advertisers. I have a sketch

here which you will have to admit is going to sell some varnish for you. One of our artists drew it up and the minute I saw it I knew it was just the thing for your line. It is only a small sketch, of course, but we can elaborate on it if it appeals to you."

All this and much more the salesman reeled off while he untied his parcel and placed the sketch, to which he had referred so triumphantly, in the center of the buyer's desk.

"You see," he began again, "we can put some copy right across the sky if you want us to. Some little slogan like 'The Varnish of Value' will be enough, and down in this corner you ought to put the price and . . ."

He got no further. The irate buyer swung round in his chair and fiercely faced the salesman.

"See here," he snapped out, "are you or am I the advertising manager for this concern? Do you or do I know what we need and what copy to use? If you will shut up for a minute and give me time and opportunity to collect my thoughts I will try to see if we can make any use of this idea. You have been doing a vaudeville monologue ever since you came in here and you haven't really said a word yet. Now keep still and give me a chance to think."

This anecdote illustrates better than any number of precepts that during the sales interview there is a time to be silent as well as a time to talk.

The Importance of Asking Questions.—It is a safe surmise that the interview is progressing favorably when the customer willingly and readily responds to questions. If his attitude is cold and reserved, this very likely is because he does not propose to buy a thing which he thinks he does not need. When, however, he begins to realize the value of the offer his mental attitude changes. His interest gradually strengthens into a desire to purchase and only his caution or indecision may

hold him back. Before this moment, questions should be avoided by the salesman, but now a few deft questions will reveal the hindrance to the consummation of the sale and suggest arguments which will overcome the final objection. Or better still, those questions may relate to the prospect's own business and thus show that the salesman is looking at his offer from the customer's point of view.

Thus the adding machine salesman who has secured the interest of a prospect to the degree that the latter is demonstrating the machine for himself, may ask what system of accounts is kept in the office, how much the bookkeeper is paid, how much overtime is worked when inventory is taken, how long it lasts, how many statements are sent out at the end of the month, and questions of like nature, in order to show the prospective buyer exactly what saving the use of the machine will effect. A wholesale salesman offering linoleum to a furniture dealer might, after interest is aroused, ask the merchant how much he sold annually, with how much advertising, what other lines he was handling, and so on. At the opening of the interview the merchant would resent queries of this kind and be disinclined to give such information. After the interview has commenced to progress favorably he will be quite willing to answer. Obviously the replies to those queries will enable the salesman to make a shrewd guess as to the best method of so wording his final appeal that it will surely clinch the sale.

Developing Confidence in the Buyer.—Presuming that the customer replies readily to the queries put to him, this will indicate that his antagonism to what has seemed the unnecessary expenditure of money is vanishing and that he is contemplating the purchase. For some reason or other, however, he may still hold back. In all probability he is a cautious or procrastinating type of buyer who needs to have his confidence

in the merits of the offer strengthened. If he lacks this confidence he is certain to postpone the purchase and perhaps to forego it entirely. The answers he makes will enable the salesman to feel intuitively where confidence is lacking and needs to be imparted.

The furniture dealer, for instance, may become interested in certain linoleums and admit that the prices are attractive. But if he hesitates for any length of time before deciding to buy, it is safe to infer that he mistrusts some other phase of the offer. He may doubt whether the goods will be equal to sample, or whether deliveries will be made on time; or any of several reasons may cause his indecision. At this point every effort should be made to increase that confidence in the all-round integrity of the offer which alone may be needed to consummate the sale. The linoleum salesman might mention other large concerns which buy his product, the quantity they purchase, and the length of time they have dealt with his house, as evidence that if such important firms as these deal with him his product must be all that he claims. Or the salesman might tell the prospect something about the history of his house—the fact that they have been in business over fifty years, or other information of the same kind.

The Use of Testimonials.—In suitable cases the best of all means of developing confidence is to place before the buyer indorsements or testimonials from those who have already tried the product. This method is of special value in the sale of a specialty or when selling to the consumer from house to house.

An adept in house-to-house canvassing, who sells soaps of different kinds to the housewife when he enters a town, usually makes his first visit to the chairman of the board of health (if there is such a person), or to other prominent citizens, with the object of securing their indorsement of his

goods. This indorsement he uses as a lever in developing the confidence of the housewife. He might, of course, carry with him testimonials from people in other towns, but he knows from experience how much stronger are local testimonials than those of strangers; he knows that in addition to inspiring confidence a testimonial signed by a local user will stir the instinct of imitation, the tendency to follow in the footsteps of others.

Where Testimonials Are Most Useful.—Testimonials are most efficacious when customers are unable to estimate the value of an article. For example, in buying a washing machine the housewife does not assume to be a competent judge of its durability or of the strength of its mechanism. She may like the machine and wish to buy it. But if she lacks confidence in her own ability as a mechanic and wonders how much it will cost for repairs, she may refuse to make the comparatively big investment. However, when the salesman puts statements before her from other users who assert that they have never had any trouble with the machine, these testimonials give her confidence in the assurance that the device will last for years without costing anything for repairs.

In the same way the salesman for a business school or a correspondence course of instruction carries with him testimonials from former students to prove that the course of instruction has been of great value to others and will therefore be of equal value to the prospect. The latter cannot judge from his own observations. If the confidence needed to make the purchase is to be aroused, the claims made must be supported by proof that they are reliable and in no way exaggerated.

Testimonials—Methods of Using.—In the case of a professional buyer or a man who has a technical knowledge of the

goods offered, the salesman should not offer testimonials as evidence of the truth of his statements. Such a buyer can see the quality for himself. To ask him to base his decision on the judgment of others is to cast a reflection upon his own power of judgment. Inexperienced buyers need to have clear and direct evidence placed in front of them. Experienced buyers may very readily be repelled by this method.

The sale of a specialty is frequently made to those who know little or nothing about it. Therefore the specialty salesman often makes good use of letters which give the opinions and experiences of users of the goods. When he shows these to a doubting customer who lacks the necessary confidence that clinches a sale, he virtually says, "Don't rely merely upon what I say! Here is testimony signed by others as to what my product has done for them."

With a wholesale buyer, procedure such as the following would be preferable: "Mr. Robbins over in Watsonville has been handling this line now for three years. I believe you know him. On his last order, which I happen to have with me, he says it's the biggest profit-maker in his whole line—it took much better with his trade than he expected." The salesman can thus quietly and confidently intimate that the letter is in his possession to be seen on request. He does not, however, thrust it before the buyer unless the latter reveals a desire to read it. In this way the full value of a strong testimonial is secured without casting any reflection upon the judgment of the buyer or arousing suspicion that the testimonial in question may exist only in the salesman's imagination.

Following Up the First Visit.—Sometimes, in spite of every effort to inspire the confidence needed to close, no sale results. This does not necessarily mean that the sale is lost or is impossible. If specialty salesmen gave up a prospect after the first or second fruitless call, most of the houses they repre-

sent would go out of business. A prospect who has shown sufficient interest in any goods to inspect them and ask questions about them may be a much more likely customer at the second or third visit that at the first. If, however, the second or any subsequent call is to be fruitful, the salesman must have additional arguments ready and new facts to bring forward; or he should be prepared to present his former facts in a new way. When the prospect finds that he is being told only what he has heard before, the implication is that he is simply being urged to buy. He then becomes impatient and unresponsive. But when he has once given a responsive audience to the salesman he is doubly willing to hear anything further in favor of the goods, if the additional sales talk presents the offer in a new light and is not merely a repetition of what has been explained.

A safe procedure to adopt when calling a second or third time is to base the selling talk on a different buying motive. In opening the interview the salesman might say that on his last visit he had said all that was necessary as to the advantages of this offer from one point of view. He had, however, been unable, through lack of time, to discuss another and equally important point, which is, etc., etc.

Thus an encyclopedia salesman, if he is unable to make a sale on the first visit, when his argument is based on the utility of his books as a mine of information, may start his second interview in this way: "Mr. Atkins, I have just sold a set of encyclopedia in the limp leather binding to your neighbor, Mr. Ellery, the president of the Griffingham Railroad. Have you considered what an attractive addition this handsome set would make to your own library, etc.?" This is a direct appeal to the initative tendency and often proves successful where a former mode of attack has failed.

Holding the Primary Object in View.—However fluent, interesting, and instructive the argument may be, the fact must

be kept in view that the main object is not to entertain and instruct, but close the sale. One of the disadvantages of learning a complete selling talk, or canvass, by rote, is that the salesman may often think that the time has not arrived to close because he has not completed the full argument. Then, when the speech is completed and the prospect fails to respond with an acceptance of the proposition, the interview becomes flat and depressing. In fact, it is likely to degenerate into an effort to persuade the buyer to purchase against his will.

The salesman who keeps in mind the primary object of his interview watches the buyer closely. He uses only those portions of his sales arguments that naturally develop from the attitude and the questions of the listener. At the same time he loses no chance of creating desire and closing the sale, because he strives to ascertain from time to time how far the prospect's mental journey has progressed.

Sound judgment and a trained knowledge of human nature are needed to select the particular methods of appeal for various occasions and for different types of minds, to know also when enough has been said of the offering and its suitability to the customer, and to recognize when desire is sufficiently aroused and the appropriate moment arrived to win action.

CHAPTER XII

STRAIGHT THINKING

The Nature of Reasoning.—Much of the salesman's permanent success depends upon his ability to think and plan ahead. Without the capacity for straight thinking, the salesman either becomes an opportunist and drifts along according to force of circumstances or the emotional impulse of the moment.

An understanding of the process of straight thinking, therefore, may be deemed a necessary part of the salesman's equipment, for the principles of logic must be applied in answering the every-day questions of business and social life.

Shall I offer the agency for my goods to Blank or to Dash? Why do maple leaves turn color in the fall? Is the Monroe Doctrine fair to other nations beside our own? Shall I advise the credit manager to extend further credit to this dealer?

None of these questions can be answered without employing the reasoning process. And, furthermore, if the answers are to be reliable and accurate, they must be free from prejudices and emotional influences. The problem, in each case, is one of weighing and calculating the various factors that are in action in any or all of the phases of the problem.

Manifestly there are many opportunities for going astray in considering any of these. To secure an accurate conclusion requires not only thorough familiarity with all the facts related to the question, but also the ability to determine the principles involved, the application of these principles, their modification by special circumstances, and all the casual relations that can effect the final decision.

For example, in considering the question, "Shall I advise the credit manager to extend further credit to Blank and Company?" each of the following points must be carefully determined:

Their present indebtedness.
Their overdue account.
The reasons they offer for requiring an extension.
The general business conditions in their line.
The special conditions in their locality.
The particular conditions that they themselves are confronted with.
Their previous dealings with various firms in this respect together with the other essentials that the precise circumstances would involve.

Even when each of these factors had been evaluated, still others might remain yet to be examined. And if at any point in the progress of the formation of the decision an opinion is inaccurately formed, then the final judgment may be wholly inaccurate and unsound!

Now, inasmuch as man's memory is often at fault, his prejudices unduly active and influential, and his means of precise observation decidedly limited, it is little wonder if his opinions and decisions are erroneous or inadequate. To put it figuratively, reasoning is like making a chain—if the material is unsatisfactory, if any of the links contain flaws, or if any link is not connected with its neighbor, the chain is unsound.

Methods of Reasoning.—Assuming that the material is satisfactory, or, in other words, that the knowledge on which to base the reasoning is correct and sufficient, there still is ample opportunity for mistakes and flaws in the making of the chain of reasoning. Just as the chain-maker must know how to handle his materials, so the thinker must know how to handle the facts that are to be made into the chain of reasoning.

The chief methods or processes employed in reasoning are three: Inductive, Deductive, and Causational. The Inductive method is that by which we arrive at general principles or laws; the Deductive method is that by which we apply these laws; the Causational method is that by which we deal with causes and effects.

The Inductive Method.—General principles, or laws of action or condition, are reached by studying individual cases of a similar nature and determining what occurrences or conditions are true in every case.

Insurance companies make use of records of an immense number of cases, so as to determine as closely as possible how great a risk they are taking in insuring a life or a ship or a house or an automobile. Sales managers, in planning a campaign, collect and study all the data they can procure in order to estimate as closely as possible the salable amount of goods, the amount of advertising, the number and kind of salesmen, the time that will be required, the cost of the campaign, and other factors of importance.

The chief dangers in using the Inductive method are those of failing to investigate sufficient quantities of data, or to collect the data from sufficiently diverse sources, or to examine the data thoroughly.

The essential points to be kept in mind in using the Inductive method are:

1. Secure a large quantity of data.
2. Make sure that the data represents a wide range of sources.
3. Examine the data thoroughly for errors or omissions.

Failure to observe any one of these essential may easily lead to error. For instance, a wholesale salesman declined the territory assigned him, saying, "No one can succeed there.

I never knew of anyone yet who could make a living in that district." True, he had known of half a dozen men who had failed in that territory. But he was at fault on each of the three points cited above. In the first place, these six failures counted for little or nothing when contrasted with the hundreds of salesmen who at that very moment were making a first-class living in that region. In the second place, these six salesmen were none of them first class and they all sold much the same line of goods, a line that was not especially like that which this salesman was to handle. In the third place, two of them had only worked in that territory for a few months, another had resigned because of ill health, the fourth had been very successful until his latest trip, and the other two were obviously unfitted for their work.

In fact, when the sales manager showed the reluctant salesman the statistics of the retail business in that territory for the past ten years, the salesman saw plainly enough that a good many wholesale salesmen must have been taking satisfactory orders.

The correct conclusion to be drawn from the data was, "Every salesman in this territory has an opportunity to succeed."

The process or method of Induction, then, is the one by which we proceed from individual cases to a general principle.

The Deductive Method.—When once a general principle has been established, it can be applied to individual cases. For example, if we know that every salesman in this territory has an opportunity to succeed, then we likewise know that any individual salesman in that territory has that opportunity. To put it in the complete form of the syllogism (a Greek expression meaning "thought-combination"):

> Every salesman in this territory has the opportunity to succeed.

John Jones is a salesman in this territory.
John Jones has the opportunity to succeed.

One danger that may occur in using the Deductive method is readily shown in the following case:

All Frenchmen are Europeans.
All Germans are Europeans.
All Frenchmen are Germans.

—which is absurd. The error here lies in the use of a means of comparison or measurement, "Europeans," which is so broad that it includes ideas that are not necessarily identical with each other. It is like trying to measure a quart of milk in a 5-gallon can, or trying to estimate the difference between two shades of blue in the wallpapers in two separate houses with no other color guide than a piece of black paper.

Another error is illustrated below:

Some barrels are made of wood.
This ash can is not made of wood.
This can is not a barrel.

—which may or may not be true. Here the mistake lies in assuming that what is true of some barrels is true of all.

The Causational Method.—This process deals with cause and effect. In it both Inductive and Deductive methods are used so that it is not an entirely different method of reasoning, but is instead a combination of methods of forming accurate judgments that applies only when causes or effects are in question. Under this general heading there are four subdivisions: Reasoning from Cause to Effect; from Effect to Cause; from Effect to Effect; and from Resemblance.

Reasoning from Cause to Effect.—In order to produce a desired effect or result we must know what force to put in

action. This whole volume is a study of the forces by means of which sales are made. It seldom happens that one single force or agency is sufficient to produce a desired effect. Even in so apparently simple an act as ringing an electric bell there must be a push button or a switch, each part of which must be properly adjusted, likewise insulated wires that connect the button with the bell and the battery, also a battery or other source of electric power of the right kind and quantity, and lastly a bell whose delicate mechanism is free from flaw. An apparently trifling defect anywhere among these numerous agencies might prevent the pressing of the button from sounding the bell.

The chain of causal links that connects a cause with the intended effect may be exceedingly lengthy and intricate. To reason from a known cause for the purpose of determining what effect will be produced is, then, a complex and at times insoluble problem. Even in the most ordinary cases allowance must be made for possible influence of many agencies beside the original cause with which the action is to begin. Unless the relation between the cause and the effect is exceedingly close, it is rarely possible to be absolutely certain that the effect desired will be produced.

A letter ordering goods is dictated. The goods will be received, if the letter is written, signed, mailed, delivered, opened, read, etc. But in the course of its brief history a multitude of opportunities are present that may lead to unexpected results.

Reasoning from Effect to Cause.—So, too, in reasoning from an effect back to its cause there is great possibility of error. The telephone rings; the cause is usually the same—the operator has put the ringing apparatus in action; but sometimes a flash of lightning or a current from a crossed wire will produce the same result. You have bad dreams; is it due

to anxiety, excessive fatigue, indigestion, exciting literature, or to some combination of these, or even to another cause or group of causes?

A buyer places an order and later on cancels it. The reason for the cancellation may be that the salesman had not thoroughly convinced the buyer; that the buyer found he had ample goods in stock; or that a rival salesman had "switched" the order by offering lower prices or better terms.

Reasoning from Effect to Effect.—This is another variant of the same process. The presence of an effect known to be due to a certain cause leads to the conclusion that another effect of that cause will also be evident upon inquiry. A red sunset is usually followed by a clear morrow; but the sunset is not the cause of fair weather; both are the effects of causes that are less apparent. Confusion and consequent error are common here as in the preceding cases.

A salesman sees a delivery wagon loading goods from a store. The store looks disorderly and dirty. Such conditions are common when a store is forced out of business—yet the retailer may be moving to a larger store in a busier location.

Reasoning from Resemblance.—A likeness between two events or two objects inevitably leads to the inquiry: Are these related to each other? Yet in many cases the resemblance is after all superficial and the causes unlike. An artificial chrysanthemum may deceive the eye completely, yet the true flower and the imitation are totally different products of unrelated origins.

The Basis of Causational Reasoning.—In order to avoid the errors that are constantly liable to occur in the various forms of Causational Reasoning, the following safeguards are employed, sometimes singly but more often collectively. With-

out their use reasoning becomes guesswork, which is not reasoning at all but the mere shadow of rational thought. Upon these principles of thought, then, all reasoning that relates to cause and effect must rest.

1. Constant Agreement. Where an occurrence is always followed by a certain other occurrence, a causal relation exists; the first need not necessarily be the cause of the second, since both may be the product of a common cause. The red sunset followed by clear weather illustrates this point; a causal relations exists, both the occurrences being due to the same meteorological conditions. A salesman selling chocolates says to buyers, "These smell delicious." He notes that customers always smell the proffered box. He knows, therefore, that he may be sure that a person will smell the chocolates if he merely says, "These smell delicious."

2. Constant Difference. Where the absence is always accompanied by the absence of a certain other occurrence, a causal relation exists. A watch that has no mainspring will not go; on discovering that this is always true of a number of watches, the conclusion is reached that the absence of the spring is connected with the watch's failure to go. But notice that unless the normal watch, in which the mainspring is present, has been studied, the absence of the vital part might not be noted. Hence it is customary for the process of Constant Agreement to be used together with that of Difference—after noting that the watch goes when wound (Agreement), one naturally lets the watch run down in order to discover whether the absence of winding will prevent the watch from going (Difference).

The retail salesman who makes out his sales slips accurately notices that his goods are delivered promptly; yet when another salesman takes orders from the same people difficulties arise. The reason is that the second salesman is careless in writing out the full name and address of the customer.

3. Observation of Residues. This process is employed in cases where an effect may be due to one or more of a number of possible causes; by eliminating cause after cause the actual cause at work in this particular instance is detected. For example, the engine of an automobile refuses to start. The cause of the trouble may be any one, or more, of a considerable number of possible causes, such as lack of gasoline, clogged feed pipe, faulty adjustment of the carbureter or of the timer, worn-out coil points, short-circuited or broken wiring, etc. The only method of determining which of the many possibilities is the source of the trouble is to use the process of Observation of Residues, checking it by means of Agreement or Difference.

4. Concurrent Variations. Occurrences that coincide regularly with regard to their place, or time, or intensity, or direction, etc., are extremely likely to be causally related. The causal connection must, however, be tested by Agreement, Difference, or Residues. The following illustrations show the use of this process.

By striking a piano key with varying force one promptly finds that the intensity of the tone varies directly with the intensity of the stroke. The rise and fall of the tide is found to concur, in the length of interval, with the amount of time required for the moon's circuit about the earth; this coincidence leads to further investigation that proves beyond doubt, by Residues, that the moon is the chief cause of the tides.

For many years malaria was attributed to the mists that arose from swampland at night, because many people exposed to that night vapor suffered from malaria, whereas those who were out of doors in that region during the daytime only were not nearly so subject to the disease. This concurrence, however, was not one of direct causation; further investigation showed that the malaria germ was carried by a mosquito, native to the district, that was far more active by night than

by day. The concurrent variation served as a guide to the true cause, although it was wrongly interpreted until the methods of Agreement, Difference, and Elimination could be brought into use. The use of Residues showed that the damp air, by itself, was not the cause of malaria, and likewise that the night air, the drinking water, the local fruits, vegetables, and other foods, and other possible agencies were none of them the causes, but that the bite of a mosquito might be the cause. The method of Agreement then demonstrated that a large proportion of those bitten by a certain genus of mosquito became infected with a germ and suffered from malaria. Agreement further showed that those who did not contract malaria from the bite of this mosquito were immune from malaria. Difference then proved that those who were not bitten did not contract the disease unless the germ were introduced into blood vessels—an occurrence that was exceedingly rare except through the mosquito bite.

A New York salesman was sent to open a new territory in the Southwest. After several weeks of fruitless work he decided that there was no market for his goods. Yet similar goods were being sold. He then attributed his non-success to the price and terms of his goods; but they were as favorable as competitors'. Possibly the trouble lay in the poor work done by a dishonest agent who had once represented the house; yet business was as bad in territory never covered by the agent as that in which he had operated. Eventually he discovered that his manner and unconscious boasting of "coming from the East" was the prime cause of the trouble, for the natives were irritated at his manner.

The Tendency to Err in Reasoning.—Reasoning takes time; although our minds are active and often travel by leaps and bounds, yet we cannot afford to base our judgments upon rash or hasty thinking. Deliberate, thorough examination of

all the data from several points of view, without prejudice, is essential. During this patient inquiry and reflection we usually employ not one or two but practically all the methods that have been discussed in the foregoing pages. Yet even under the most favorable conditions the human mind is likely to err; it is stored with a vast amount of information on a myriad of topics; to reject all thoughts and ideas except those bearing directly on the subject under consideration is almost if not wholly impossible, even for a highly trained and organized intellect; likewise to reason without following some bypath leading to error is exceedingly difficult. This tendency to false conclusions is, in fact, so marked and so serious that it is worth while for us to spend some time listing and examining the chief errors that the mind is likely to make.

Fallacies—Errors of Reasoning.—Any mistake that occurs in the process of reaching a conclusion is termed a "fallacy" (from the Latin word *fallax,* deceptive). The classification of fallacies includes three main divisions; fallacies of Observation, of Expression, and of Thought.

Fallacies of Observation.—Our senses are the means by which we make observation. The likelihood of error due to deception of the senses is obvious in the case of the moving pictures, and also is apparent when we try to locate the source of a distant sound. A still more striking instance is that almost all smokers are unable to enjoy smoking in the dark; although the pleasure in smoking would appear to be based upon the sense of taste and smell, yet the inability to see the smoke admittedly detracts so much from the enjoyment that but few blind men are smokers.

Errors in thought not only arise from mistaken sense perception, but also from inability to perceive the whole of an occurrence. Sleight of hand tricks, in which the magician

causes a card or a ball to appear and disappear, are a common instance of the tendency of the mind to assume full knowledge of what has happened, when in reality the observer has been in such a position that he could not possibly determine what had been done. Witnesses in court frequently display wide discrepancies in their accounts of automobile accidents and similar events. This is to be expected, for the majority of our acts are performed in quick response to occurrences that we have but partly observed. A ball player involuntarily prepares to catch the ball when he sees another player, who has the ball, go through the motions of throwing to him; a commuter, although he has been reading the evening paper from the moment he got on the train, automatically realizes when he is nearing his station. Furthermore, errors in observation are inevitable when our attention is directed to some other matter than that which happens to be the source of the mistake. A salesman who is absorbed in displaying his goods may not notice that his listener has become indifferent; the listener may be so interested in the salesman's remarks that he does not see that the time for another appointment is already past. For this reason great care must be taken to observe and to test observations of any data that are involved in matters of reasoning.

Fallacies of Expression.—Language, the medium through which we commonly express thought, is by no means perfect. Absolute accuracy of statement is difficult because most words have a breadth of meaning that permits more than one interpretation and also because the accent or emphasis placed on a word may lead to misunderstanding.

Error Arising from Ambiguity.—The use of a word in a manner that suggests or permits more than one interpretation is an error in ambiguity. The following examples illustrate

this point. "The exception proves the rule," is commonly used as if it meant, "the existence of an exception to the rule shows that the rule is sound," whereas the actual meaning is, "the existence of an exception is a test of the rule's value." "Strychnine is a poison; this medicine contains strychnine; therefore this medicine is a poison"; but whether the medicine is poisonous depends on the quantity of strychnine in each dose. This type of error is especially common in the use of familiar and general expressions, such as "Southerner," "American," "Republican," "poor," "good," and the like, which are capable of a variety of meanings. And although the precise interpretation intended can often be determined from the context, yet this is not always the case.

Error Arising from Accent or Emphasis.—In listening to a speaker we depend upon the stress that he lays on his words to indicate his precise meaning. If the stress is vague or if it is misplaced, uncertainty or downright miscomprehension may result. Note the following illustrations of this point: A line in Tennyson's fine poem, "The Revenge," is often read as follows: "And the lion there lay *dying*, and they yielded to the foe"; but the stress should be placed on "lion" in contrast to the less courageous temper of the rest, who yielded. Another line frequently misread is the famous quotation from Shakespeare's "Merchant of Venice," "The quality of mercy is not strained," in which few people except actors or experienced readers ever think of emphasizing the most significant word in the line—"not."

Fallacies of Thought.—Under this heading come a large number of errors that may be classified in various ways; the two main divisions and their subdivisions should be kept clearly in mind, but the minor classifications are more for the sake of indicating minor distinctions than for common use. The

two main divisions are Logical Errors and Psychological Errors; the former consisting of errors in pure reasoning, the latter consisting of errors due to emotional or instinctive prejudices.

Logical Errors.—The term "Logical Errors" is applied to errors in the application of the methods of reasoning—Inductive, Deductive, and Causational—already described. The classification that follows gives such errors under a rather different grouping. The chief divisions here made are two: False Presumption, under which come False Assumption and Arguing in a Circle; and False Cause.

False Presumption.—The first type of error under this heading, False Assumption, consists in assuming as true some point that still requires proof. For instance, to assume that modern life rests on a commercial basis, although apparently free from danger, is to assume as true, a point that can be disputed. Many people assume that liberty implies freedom to do as they please, provided that they do not interfere with the safety, convenience, or liberty of others. Yet this definition can be questioned and should be proved before it is used as a presumption on which to base an argument. Salesmen are apt to assume that a prospective customer is familiar with their commodity; yet the assumption should not be made without first obtaining adequate proof. Errors in Inductive and Deductive Reasoning and in Reasoning from Resemblance are in this class.

The second type of error, under the heading of False Presumption, is that of Arguing in a Circle. It consists of proving a statement by using a part or even the whole of that statement as its own proof. For example, people sometimes argue that in order to meet the high cost of living wages should be raised, overlooking the fact that increased wages lead at once to

increased prices. Their error lies in assuming that prices are not related to wages.

Inexperienced salesmen frequently argue in a circle somewhat as follows: The people I interview reject my offerings because they are poor in quality; I know that the goods are poor in quality because people reject them.

False Cause.—This type of error consists of failure to detect the true relations between causes and results; the chief subdivisions are Inadequate Cause and Interference of Other Causes.

The Inadequate Cause appears in many of the cases of the familiar objection, "I can't afford it." For while this excuse is occasionally valid, yet it often is not the true cause of the rejection of the commodity at all. The actual cause commonly is lack of desire or even of interest. Inadequate Cause, then, is the name given to the error that results from attributing a result to a cause not powerful enough to produce that result.

Interference of Other Causes, i.e., the modification of a result through the action of additional causes besides that under consideration, is likewise rather frequent. A salesman sees that a customer is paying little or no attention to his remarks; he assumes that his words and his demonstration are lacking in force or vividness, whereas this may not be the case. His presentation of his sales argument may be unusually able, but none the less the customer's attention may be diverted by matters that he knows require his presence elsewhere. This point is well illustrated in the examples under "Concurrent Variations," page 147. In analyzing failure to make a sale, there is special need for guarding against this error, for clearly a number of widely varied causes may have operated in conjunction to prevent the sale, and yet, on the other hand, there may have been but one factor that "killed" action. An analysis of causes consequently requires a large amount of data and a

thorough familiarity with the subject as well as with the particular case involved.

Summary of Logical Fallacies.—In summing up Logical Fallacies the point to be noted is that these come in one of two general classes: failure to draw a conclusion accurately—false induction and deduction, i.e., false assumption and also arguing in a circle; failure to calculate causal relations, i.e., false cause.

Psychological Fallacies.—There are other errors in thinking which arise from misuse of persuasion; they consist of appeals to feelings or emotions when the subject of the discussion does not justify such an appeal. Flattery is the most common form of this class of fallacies, but unsound appeals to patriotism, veneration for authority or fame, ignorance, or prejudice—all these are likewise fallacious, since they in reality are ignoring the actual merits of the question and endeavoring to substitute emotionalism for reasoning.

For example, a salesman says, "You have such a charming home, Mrs. Black, that I am sure you will be interested in making a trial of this vacuum cleaner." But the connection between the charm of the home and the trial of the cleaner is so slight that as a piece of reasoning it is fallacious; the argument is flattering but not convincing. An advertisement of a brand of axes might show a picture of Lincoln chopping down a tree or splitting rails, but the fact that Lincoln made a living by swinging an axe is no reason why you or I should buy that particular brand of axe, yet our natural veneration for Lincoln is such that the advertiser relies on it to secure at least favorable attention, if not interest in his wares. This mode of influencing opinion is not an appeal to reason but to feeling; regarded as reasoning, it is fallacious.

Sometimes a prospective customer refuses to buy in some such words as these, "Of course, you know, Mr. Brown, that

a man in my position has many calls, not only upon his money, but upon his time as well; consequently you can see that I cannot feel justified in making this purchase at present." This is all very well if the salesman knows that the facts are as represented, but if he does not know this and the speaker is aware of his ignorance, this excuse is a piece of fallacious argument based on the salesman's humanly natural reluctance to confess ignorance.

The fallacy of prejudice often endangers the success of the salesman; for example, some people dislike anyone who speaks with a drawl, others are distrustful of left-handed persons, others do not like to do important business on the thirteenth of the month. None of these objections is an adequate reason for declining to interview the salesman, yet these and many other similar prejudices are often influential in creating opposition. Local prejudices are sometimes regarded by the people who maintain them as patriotic; in days gone by Southerners were inclined to be proud of their dislike for "Yankees" and Westerners showed hostility toward eastern products. In some states there used to be a rather strong feeling that the climate, the scenery, the crops, the schools, and everything that characterized that state was superior to similar products or conditions elsewhere. This narrowness is mainly unreasonable, yet it held sway over the minds of thousands and interfered with social and commercial welfare.

These psychological fallacies are all the more liable to occur because a psychological appeal to the emotions is justifiable under some circumstances. Whenever an appeal can be justly and reasonably based on patriotism, the marked intelligence of the listener, veneration for noted persons or principles, and the like, that appeal is not fallacious. The sale of Liberty bonds was quite rightly based on an appeal to our patriotic emotions; a salesman showing an encyclopedia to a college professor is equally justified in making it clear that he regards

the professor's scholarship with respect; the proprietor of a hotel with a record of celebrated guests, such as Washington, Dickens, and Mark Twain, is fully entitled to use this list as a means of rousing interest in his business. In each case there is a direct connection between the emotional appeal and the offering. But unless a sound connection of that sort does exist the emotional appeal is fallacious.

The Basis of Straight Thinking.—Accurate use of language, thorough observation of all the essential data, and reasoning that is free from error, form the foundation on which sound judgment are based. Knowledge alone does not suffice; it is essential but it avails little unless skilfully used. This skill requires ability to select the facts and other information that bear on the case, to arrange these facts in logical order, and to avoid even the appearance of incomplete connection between ideas. In other words, thoroughness alone can prevent the fragmentary and irrelevant disputation that all too commonly is used in the place of an effective demonstration of the commodity.

CHAPTER XIII

EFFECTIVE DICTION

The Language of Business.—How pleasant it is to listen to people who talk "straight from the shoulder"! People who do not talk too much, who do not hem and haw, who do not bore us with shopworn phrases or with needless details—people whose statements are direct and bracing, who inspire us by their manner and by their ideas.

This concise, precise, vivid diction is more highly valued in the business world today than ever before. The salesman is reluctantly granted a moment or two in which to state his errand. Now, if ever, every word must strike home. By the time he has spoken fifty words his fate is settled—either he leaves at once, a discredited and unwelcome interloper, or he has won his opportunity to present his commodity. Upon his skill in choosing and arranging his words will depend not only his success in gaining a hearing, but likewise his success in making the sale.

Conciseness.—In being concise he is thorough, yet wastes no words; he is not curt, but he does not wander or hesitate, nor does he offer needless information. For example, he would never speak as follows: "Mr. Jones, I have taken the liberty of calling on you this morning to discuss a matter that our firm regards as especially important at the present time."

Not a word in the sentence indicates any adequate reason for listening further. Yet each of those 28 words gave the speaker an opportunity to attract and even to dominate his hearer!

How much better if he had said, "Mr. Jones, is your bank account insured?" as the check protector salesman may say.

Precision.—In being precise the salesman selects words and phrases that will convey his exact meaning—words that are neither vague nor unfamiliar, but suited to the subject and to the listener. To attain such accuracy an extensive vocabulary is an obvious necessity. With experts the salesman must use technical expressions; with persons who are unacquainted with the subject he must employ expressions and phrases that will be clear and definite. Consider the weaknesses in the following:

"In regard to that little matter we spoke of last week."

"You will find this a very good book."

"The subject I want to see you about is very interesting."

"The make-ready is poor." (Clear only to a printer.)

Compare these sentences with those below:

"Last week we were discussing the premium rates for insuring your Brookline motor service station."

"This book is unusually clear and also thorough and reliable."

"800,000 Americans read the *Brown Magazine* every month; and everyone of them does so because he finds that it satisfied five needs. These five needs of every-day people are—"

"This oval patch at the top of the page is certainly lighter in color than the rest; the paper has not been so firmly pressed against the type at this point." (To one unfamiliar with the printing trade.)

Vividness.—To make a statement vivid use terms that immediately rouse lifelike and striking pictures in the listener's mind. Manifestly these terms must be familiar and specific. The value of specific language has been shown already in the examples under "Precision"; the last of those examples also

shows the need for familiar expressions. Yet none of the examples is especially vivid, because the terms employed do not make the listener see the lifelike and striking picture that is essential to vividness. Something more, then, is needed.

Consider the expression, "He works like lightning." The sole purpose evidently is to make a vivid impression; "work" and "lightning," at first sight, have no relation to each other, but as the involuntary picture of a lightning flash passes before the mind's eye we recognize that its most striking characteristic is speed and that the speaker intends us to realize that "the work is done with speed of a flash of lightning." But to use this lengthier way of stating the fact would weaken the vividness of the description by making it less striking.

Again, in teaching geography, teachers frequently say, "Italy is like a boot." Clearly there can only be one respect in which a country and a boot can be alike and that is in the shape. Yet to say, "Italy, in its contour, somewhat resembles the long boot worn in the seventeenth century," would be far less effective. Here, too, the more complex statement is less vivid.

To be striking, then, the expression must be simple and terse; to be lifelike it must suggest a picture of a well-known object. These are the general principles to be kept in mind. That is to say, a comparison or a contrast with some familiar idea must be suggested in the fewest possible words.

Metaphors and similes, the commonest of the figures of speech, are the most usual means of making a vivid impression by means of a comparison. A simile states a likeness between two ideas, especially those that are unrelated in most respects. The words "like" or "as," or their equivalents, are used. A metaphor omits "like," "as," etc., and boldly asserts that one idea is the other. For instance, "Mt. Blanc is the monarch of mountains" is a metaphor, while "Mt. Blanc is like a monarch of the mountains" is a simile.

Much of the vernacular, the speech of every-day life, employs these figurative modes of expression. Slang is largely the attempt of comparatively uneducated people to phrase an idea vividly. Maxims and proverbs also show this tendency, "A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush," "Look before you leap," "A rolling stone gathers no moss," and many another saying reveal the rural life of other days summing up its experience in picture language that is out of date, at least for those of us who are brought up away from village and farm. Today we find this vividness in business diction; trade-marks, slogans, and advertisements often use words as well as pictures to "strike" the reader's mind sharply enough to leave a lasting impression on his memory.

Pleasing Speech.—The utterance as well as the structure of sentences and the selection of phrasing must be given careful attention. Everyone takes pleasure in listening to a speaker whose voice and whose speech are free from coarseness and likewise from affectation, avoiding both harshness and fastidiousness. For this reason the following points should be noted:

Oral Training.—Speaking voices, like singing voices, belong in one of three classes that may be described as tenor, or high; baritone, or medium; and bass, or low. But just as a singer's most pleasing tones are not at the top or the bottom but at the middle of his range, so with the speaking voice; it must not suggest shrillness nor growling, nor must it sound forced. Any tendency to a nasal tone or to a thick "wooly" quality must also be overcome.

As we have only a slight idea of the actual sound of our own voices, it is necessary to secure the criticism of friends who will be frank and likewise sound in their comments. Once aware of a defect, the next step is to imitate the sound as cor-

rectly made and to practice forming that sound with especial care to avoid relapsing into the former error.

This method applies to the utterance of words, as well. But there are two phases of the subject which should be distinguished, namely, enunciation and pronunciation.

Enunciation.—Enunciation requires that each letter should be sounded clearly and accurately, yet without apparent effort or undue nicety or hestitation. The most frequent errors occur in words that are most commonly used; for example, the "h" in "what" should be sounded slightly, like "hwot" rather than "wot"; "half" is neither "heff" nor "hawf." Space does not permit detailed treatment of this point; those who find that their enunciation is weak should consult a text on oral English, such as those listed at the end of this book.

Each syllable of a word should be spoken suitably in relation to the syllable or word that precedes and that follows. Hasty utterance leads to such crudities as, "Wotcha gona tell um?" or "'S mos' xtroarnary 'at cha can' fine 'at le'er!"—meaning "It is most extraordinary that you cannot find that letter." On the other hand, fastidious utterance leads to such affectations as "naytyure," which should be pronounced "naytchyoor," softening the "t" to "tch." However, words spoken with natural rapidity group themselves in phrases that are blended as if the individual words were merely syllables of one long word; for example, "Not at all" must be pronounced "Not tat tall" unless the separate words are spoken with a marked pause between them; yet to speak naturally does not mean blurred or slovenly articulation.

Pronunciation.—Pronunciation requires that each word should be spoken so as to give each letter and each syllable its due and no more; furthermore, it requires that the accent fall on some one syllable or, in long words, such as "incompre-

hensibility," on two syllables, in accordance with the laws of good usage. In the case of unfamiliar words, this compels the use of a dictionary, and, indeed, the mispronunciation of many common words is all too frequent just because people are too lazy or indifferent to take the pains to make sure of their usage.

Rate of Utterance and Pitch of Voice.—Monotony, either in the rate at which one speaks or in the pitch or tone of the voice, is tiresome and even irritating. The rate should vary, slow speech being used for emphasis, moderate speed for ordinary circumstances, and rapid only under unusual circumstances, as for instance, when the listener is thoroughly acquainted with some data that must be mentioned. Rapidity, except under very special conditions, is absolutely to be avoided; it leads to slovenly utterance as well as to confusion and loss of interest. Simple and commonplace as the subject may seem to the salesman, he must recognize that to his listener it is probably neither. For the salesman to hurry through his remarks is almost certainly a sign that he does not have a high opinion of his wares, or of his listener, or of his arguments. Deliberate, thoughtful diction is almost always the sign of well-planned and conscientiously phrased convictions.

The pitch or tone of the voice should not only be comfortable to both speaker and listener, as has been pointed out under the topic of "Pleasing Speech," but there should also be a rise and fall in the pitch so as to avoid monotony of tone. As a rule emphatic words should not be spoken in a higher key, as many untrained and unthinking persons do, but in a slightly lower and somewhat softer tone; in this way the listener is unconsciously led to pay closer attention and to feel more in the confidence of the salesman. If loud tones are ever employed, they should be spoken at a pitch that is below rather than above the average key. Higher pitch is apt to be displeasing, except

when the voice is soft. Above all things, a "forced" or nervously tense note is most annoying; its effect is almost as vexing as a yell or a scream.

Suiting the Diction to the Subject.—The style or manner of speech naturally varies with the subject. A salesman of aluminum ware and a salesman of investment securities do not talk in the same way, although they both use the same language and use it with accuracy and effectiveness. There is no need for detailed treatment of this point, but it must be kept in mind. The one essential is that unfamiliar subjects must be explained in detail, with simple and well-known words and examples, whereas familiar topics can be passed over more quickly though never carelessly.

Suiting the Diction to the Listener.—Never talk either "down" or "up" to a listener; if he is less educated than the salesman, that misfortune must not be hinted at in any way. Certainly the manner of speech—especially as to choice of words—must not be over his head, yet the use of every-day terms does not require the salesman to speak as if he were unaccustomed to them or as if he found himself unable to talk about his commodity except in technical phrases. On the other hand, if the listener proves to be superior to the salesman in education, there is no need to endeavor to appear to be his equal in learning. If the commodity is worth presenting for his consideration, the listener will be as appreciative of a matter-of-fact, straightforward talk as he would if the explanation were given in the most abstruse terminology. But in either case the salesman must work all the more carefully for conciseness, precision, and vividness.

Suiting the Diction to the Speaker.—Each of us is a definite personality, marked by habits and mannerisms. Just

as it would be absurd for a man with a deep voice to talk in a shrill falsetto, so it would be unwise to attempt unnecessary modifications of normal traits of diction. That is, while speech must not be slovenly nor fastidious, yet apart from rectifying absolute error, it is best to retain the pitch and rate that are most comfortable together with the natural style that belongs to the region where the speaker has been brought up. For a Southerner or a Westerner to try to talk like a Bostonian, produces the impression of deliberate affectation. To sum up the whole matter, the speaker must be at ease and also appear at ease with his subject, his listener, and himself.

Planning the Sales Talk.—Sales talks can rarely if ever be planned so as to deal most effectively with every condition that the salesman is likely to encounter. On the other hand, failure to prepare a thorough mode of treatment for every variety of occasion is to invite disaster. The actual wording to be used cannot always be determined, nor can the order in which the selling points will be presented; none the less, it is not only possible, but essential, that the salesman should work out a full statement of each point that is of service, and also that he should make a series of plans showing the points to be used and the most advisable order of using them in all the more customary situations that he meets with.

The material that he can draw upon for his discussions and demonstrations is in part, at least, provided by his firm. It remains for him to study that material, adapting himself to it as far as possible, determining when and why and how he must modify it, and, in a word, making himself complete master of every detail.

The Analytical Outline.—The most direct and effective method is that of the analytical outline. The salesman, after a thorough study of his commodity, takes pencil and paper,

together with all the data that he has been able to secure in his study and investigation, and works out the answer to the following questions:

What is the origin of the commodity?
How is it made? Where? By whom?
What are its chief uses?
Who are its chief users?
What are chief proofs of its durability, reliability, quality, accessibility, serviceability, economy of price, economy in use, etc.
What other commodities serve the same purpose?
Wherein is this article superior, wherein inferior, to those others?
What characteristics of the commodity are emotionally attractive?
What characteristics are logically attractive?

Through this analysis the salesman covers every likely selling point. His next task is to select these points from the mass of information that he has just assembled here. In making this selection he must choose the unusual or novel points for use in securing attention, the emotionally attractive for rousing interest, the logical appeal to cold reason for creating desire, and the most urgent and commanding of these for leading up to the action at the close. Of course, the precise selection and order depend on the prospect's nature. In selling an automobile to a wealthy stockbroker the arrangement and selection would vary decidedly from that for use with a high school principal.

Practice in Diction.—Throughout the salesman's career, from his earliest days until he retires from the business of selling, he is forever trying out this method and that of presenting his arguments, demonstrating his wares, handling this or that objection, and so on. The more alert and adroit the

salesman, the more you may be sure he is constantly planning and practicing. Just as Paderewski and Heifetz and the other masters of music spend hours upon hours in daily exercise, so with the salesman. A new mode of presentation of a point occurs to him, and at once he tries it on his friends, his family, the elevator boy, the next customer. To him everyone who can possibly be regarded as possessing a customer's point of view is a target for him to practice at. He studies the effect of each of half a dozen modes of intonation, of a similar number of arrangements of words or of thoughts; and as in these details, so with the big, broad treatment of his subject. He always remembers that success in diction is the result of concentrated practice in thought and in speech.

CHAPTER XIV

OBJECTIONS AND HOW TO ANSWER THEM

The Necessity for Studying the Meeting of Objections. —While the salesman is explaining the advantages of the offer in detail, the buyer as a rule is carefully endeavoring to detect and weigh any possible disadvantages from his point of view and is reflecting on the reasons why he should not buy. Therefore a sale of any importance is rarely made without the customer raising several objections. In finding skilful and convincing replies for these more or less reasonable objections, the mettle of the salesman is put often to a severe test of mental alertness and tactful pertinacity. He may possess all the requisites of appearance, manners, courage, enthusiasm, and knowledge of his goods; but if he is nonplused when he meets with any objection, whether arising from a purely personal cause, or merely as an excuse advanced for not buying, a large percentage of possible sales will be lost.

When any difficulty is experienced in obtaining an interview, an argumentative debate which will call forth all the resourceful reasoning power of the salesman may be safely looked forward to. The fact that the prospect grants the interview reluctantly indicates that he knows little about the goods or else that he thinks they are of little or no use to him. In handling such a customer the salesman must be primed to meet every conceivable kind of objection. To equip himself so that he can surmount these obstacles, he should make a practice of listing the different reasons which buyers advance against buying. Then, in his moments of leisure, he can con-

struct carefully reasoned replies and study the art of presenting these replies in an effective manner.

There is nearly always one method of meeting an objection which is better than another, and a third way which is best of all. When the salesman knows that he is prepared to answer with a reasoned reply every argument against buying, however trivial or irrelevant these arguments may be, confidence in his own argumentative powers increases.

Never Openly Contradict the Buyer.—Before we analyze the most common reasons which are advanced against buying and study the best way of meeting these objections, it is well to consider the salesman's attitude when he is compelled to contradict the buyer. To do this in a way which will in no way interfere with the amicable relations necessary for making a sale, requires tact in a high degree coupled with good humor and perfect self-control. If the salesman betrays by the tone of his voice that the objection irritates him, if beneath an appearance of outward calm the buyer can see that the salesman is nettled, then the chance of doing business diminishes at once. The only way in which the salesman can keep complete command over his irritation when an obviously foolish or trivial objection is raised is both to maintain and to show his good humor.

Behind tact and good humor there must also be a quiet persistence, a steady determination to refuse to accept anything excepting a downright "No." To reveal this calm persistence the salesman must be able to answer every kind of objection. The refusal to buy may be a serious reason or a trivial excuse. Whatever the objection, he must convince the customer of its futility by the logical and persuasive force of his reasoning.

An able salesman rather courts an objection which he can meet effectively. Only an objection at which he is nonplused, which he is incapable of refuting occasions him discomfort.

The Mental Indecision of the Buyer.—Let us assume that an interview has been granted, that the proposition has been explained, and that the customer displays interest without raising any serious objections to the offer. It is then logical that he should express his willingness to buy; yet he refuses for a trivial reason or no expressed reason at all. To what can this refusal be due? Obviously to mental indecision and not to any lack of merit in the goods or service.

This indecision may be due to caution, to the habit of procrastinating, to an inability to make up his mind, or to circumstances which relate to the customer's business and of which the salesman is necessarily ignorant. It is important for every salesman to study and develop the various methods best suited to his own personality in handling the undecided, cautious, or procrastinating buyers. Experience shows that they form the majority of those who turn down a sales offer for a more or less trivial reason.

Three Kinds of Objections.—It will help the salesman to meet the objections that are usually raised if he will distinguish between them. As a rule they belong to either one of three classes.

First, there are the honest objections. Here the customer is sincere in his attitude. He believes that for the reason alleged he cannot afford to take advantage of the offer. For instance, a buyer may raise the objection that he has sufficient stock on hand and really cannot entertain the thought of buying more at the present time. This may be a perfectly honest answer.

Objections of the second class are much more frequent; they differ from honest reasons for not buying, in that they are usually trivial excuses for procrastinating. The buyer may be passively interested and may even in a half-hearted way consider taking advantage of the offer. But, because of an

innate tendency to procrastinate or a dislike to make the necessary expenditure, he temporizes. Not wishing to be discourteous by openly and bluntly stating that he has no intention of buying, he raises objections of various kinds to hide his true motive.

Sometimes the buyer fails to become interested in the offer because the salesman has not yet been given an opportunity to explain its advantages clearly. An excuse is then proffered as a reason for dismissing the salesman, such as, "I am too busy to decide today," or "I have no money to spend."

Another kind of excuse or reason for not buying is that frequently raised when competitive goods are being sold. The object in this case is to secure a slight reduction in price or a larger discount than usual. A typical objection of this kind is, "I can buy at a better price from So-and-So." In most cases the salesman will be able to make a fairly shrewd guess whether the objection raised is sincere and honest or is only an excuse; or whether it is an effort to beat down his price.

The third class of objections are difficult to deal with, for they are unspoken. Retail customers refuse frequently to buy without offering any reason or excuse. Wholesale and specialty buyers are not immune from the unspoken objection.

When no reason is given for not buying, beyond a perfunctory, "Not today," the salesman is found with the alternative of accepting the dismissal or ascertaining the reason for the prospect's refusal to buy. Adroit questions or even a point-blank "Why not?" may prove advantageous, but more often the salesman must sense the reason and then answer it in the form of additional argument.

For example, many retail customers refuse to buy because they lack funds but dislike to admit it. In such cases the salesman may say, "Many people prefer to have goods sent C. O. D., because they dislike to carry much money with them; should you follow this sensible plan, it would be a pleasure to send

this dress C. O. D. for you." Other customers refuse to buy for personal reasons. A person with a deformity hesitates to buy anything that may disclose it. A prospect with a grievance, grief, or antipathy will not expose their intensely personal feelings to the occasional salesman.

Answering Objections and Excuses.—Honest objections must be answered by earnest, convincing reasoning. If the reply is not sufficiently convincing to refute the objection or to convince the buyer of his error, then its existence must be acknowledged; but it must, if possible, be immediately offset by compensating advantages.

Excuses are best answered by means of gentle ridicule, the object being to turn the excuse into a reason for buying, as will be shown later; or if the excuses are obviously trivial and raised merely because the customer has not yet been "sold" on the proposition, they may be ignored as of no importance, and the argument adhered to with the hope that as the customer listens to the advantages of the proposition he will shelve the objections formerly raised. The policy in such a case should be to stimulate his lukewarm desire with a little of the salesman's own enthusiasm until a willingness is expressed to accept the offer. This is often a much sounder method than to try to break down the comparatively trivial opposition that is represented by an excuse.

Objections for the purpose of securing better prices or terms, as explained in the following chapter, should be firmly handled if the salesman's experience is that his prices in the majority of cases arouse no criticism. No matter how important the buyer may be, he should not be allowed to beat down the price of an offer as a condition of his patronage.

Meeting Objection as to Quality.—The most common honest objections are those relating to quality or prices. The

goods offered are said to be inferior in quality or higher in price than those of competitors.

In combating the assertion that the goods are inferior to others in quality, the salesman should frankly admit the good points of competing goods and then contrast them with points in favor of his own. As emphasized in Chapter XII, such comparisons should be made only when the subject is broached by the customer. If the salesman cannot refute or explain away some obvious defect or deficiency in his own goods; or if he must admit that those of a competitor are undeniably superior—well, under these circumstances, he is representing the wrong house or pushing the wrong kind of merchandise and the remedy is obvious.

Objections or disparaging comments upon quality are sometimes presented without any reference to competing lines. These remarks must be squarely met. Any obvious deficiency in the goods should be admitted, as when shopworn articles or "seconds" are offered which are likely to call forth objections as to quality. When a customer knows that the salesman is carefully refraining from exaggerating the quality of the goods, these are considered less critically and with their cost price in mind.

Every customer naturally wants to combine the maximum of quality with the minimum price. Goods of an inferior grade may still be an attractive offer at the right price. The "best" quality and the "lowest" price, however, are obviously opposing terms, and an offer which professes to combine the two only irritates the intelligent buyer. A customer is more readily convinced of the unreasonableness of any objections as to quality, if no extravagant claims are made as to the grade of the merchandise offered.

Meeting Objections as to Price.—Objections raised as to price are the most frequent of all honest reasons for refusing

to buy. Many factors need to be known and considered in order to answer an objection of this kind effectively. The salesman who finds that this reason for refusing his offer is frequently raised will, of course, be furnished by his house with the most effective replies that the circumstances of the case permit.

Meeting Price Objections in Retail Selling.—Objection is often made to the price, not from the viewpoint of value, but because it is more than the customer can afford to pay. This objection is frequently heard in a retail store. The goods are too expensive and the customer can afford only something of a cheaper grade. It rests with the salesperson to convince the shopper that the expensive article, if it is a thing to be worn or used, will prove more economical than the cheaper grade in the end; or if it is an article with a style appeal, that the additional satisfaction afforded by its appearance will more than compensate for the higher price. When the customer cannot be convinced by such arguments as these, something at a lower price must be offered.

Having considered objections as to quality and price in general, let us now consider more specific objections in detail.

"We Are Stocked Up to the Limit."—This is a refrain that from time to time is heard in every wholesale warehouse and in every retail store. Occasionally it is offered as an excuse to get rid of the salesman. Frequently it is the truth. If that is the case, the reply may be as follows:

"I didn't expect to call and find you out of stock, Mr. Brown. With an article like this in every-day demand, you must keep a good supply on hand. Sooner or later, I hope much sooner than you think—as I like to hear of quick turnovers—you will be in the market again. So I've called to explain my proposition and show you it's to your interest to

consider stocking my line just as soon as you can. . . ."

In this way the selling talk is again introduced and the mind of the customer is switched back to the original train of thought which may lead to a sale in spite of his complete line of stock.

"We Are Well Satisfied with Our Present Connections." —This disconcerting reply is frequently a stumbling block to the inexperienced salesman. The objection, however, is not a difficult one to meet. The obvious answer is that the salesman is not calling to ask for a break to be made with present connections; his mission is to convince the buyer that it will be advantageous to add a new connection. So he replies:

"I am glad of that, Mr. Brown. The firm you are dealing with is a very good house, but you misunderstand me if you think I have come to ask you to break your present connection. No. All that I ask is that you make a new one—one that in every way will be just as satisfactory to you as your present connection."

Here the salesman may direct the attention to those samples of goods which compete least of all with those of the rival house. Or if the purchase of the new lines involves the throwing out of a competing line, then the suggestion may be made that the two lines be sold together so that a comparison as to profit and demand can be made.

If the salesman has the good fortune to represent a house which is the leader in its line or which has an unrivaled reputation for some of the goods it manufactures, then the desirability of profiting from the good-will and reputation enjoyed by the house will naturally be suggested to the dealer. To handle a well-known line with a national reputation is an asset in any retail business, and no dealer can afford to ignore the best products of an advertised line because he has already made another connection.

"No Room for a New Line."—The department store buyer or the big retailer can afford to carry a wide range of brands and yet always find room for a really salable line; the dealer with only a moderate amount of capital to invest in stock must pick and choose with care among the numerous brands offered to him. Thus the small retail merchant who is visited daily by competing salesmen offering almost duplicate goods frequently raises the objection that he has no room for a new line.

One way of meeting this objection is to remind the dealer that a great danger to sound storekeeping is a collection of unsalable stock which fills valuable space, ties up capital, and eats into profits. Of course, to state this fact bluntly would be to reflect upon the buying and storekeeping ability of the dealer, and then all hope of introducing a new line would vanish. It can, however, be done tactfully—somewhat like this:

"Mr. Hopkins, every merchant, no matter how careful he may be and how clever a buyer, has some lines in his store which sell very slowly and which do not earn a fair return on the investment. They take up space which could be much more profitably used for more popular goods with a quicker turnover.

"Now you're a progressive merchant. You don't handle the same lines year in and year out. You close out one or two lines every now and then and replace them with others.

"Mr. Hopkins, I suggest to you that it will pay you to close out some of those lines which move slowly and put this in their place. You've acknowledged the profit is attractive and they're likely to prove good sellers. So . . ." —and after a little more selling talk an attempt is again made to introduce the new line.

The objection of the storekeeper that he is all stocked up or hasn't room for a new line may be an excuse. It can then be effectively met by ignoring it rather than by replying, "Well, you could probably use a little more—" in an inquiring tone.

Such a reply is obviously weak since the salesman cannot possibly form an accurate opinion about the dealer's needs. When there is reason to believe that this objection is real, it can be met by the assertion that the salesman wants to explain the merits of his offer for the prospect's future advantage. If the dealer reveals no impatience but apparently seems interested in the sales talk, another attempt to introduce the new line can be made as if no objection had been raised. If the dealer still remains obdurate and positively asserts that he has no room for a new line, the only course left is to try to obtain a small order "just for a trial."

Meeting the Pessimistic Mood.—Such objections as "business is too quiet," or "times are bad," are frequently raised by cautious and pessimistic buyers, who as soon as a period of business depression sets in, "run to cover." To contradict such a customer flatly by telling the speaker his pessimism is not well founded is tactless, as a man of this type usually resents direct attacks upon his pessimistic mood. Moreover, such an assertion lays the salesman open to the obvious charge of self-interest.

When confronted with a pessimistic buyer the salesman should agree that trade may be poor and then turn the admission to his favor in this way. "When business is quiet, Mr. Brown, it is essential that something be done to better it. This proposition offers you an exclusive advantage over your competitors and is one of the best things you can do to improve your business. For these reasons . . ."

A self-registering scale salesman meets the objection that "Times are bad and I really can't afford it," in this way: "When times are hard, Mr. Brown, it's up to all of us to practice the most rigid economy. One of the best ways of effecting economies in business is to stop the little leaks which are not easily detected, but which amount to a lot in the course of a

year. This scale will stop many of these leaks. It is the best kind of economy to invest in for use in your store."

Objection on the Score of Taste.—Matters of taste should never be questioned. Most of the objections offered by retail customers are of this nature. The woman shopper says that she does not like this color or that style and prefers something else which the store may not be able to supply. It is useless in these circumstances to attempt to prove that the article which does not meet with approval is really equal to that which is preferred. The only course is to offer the customer the best alternative choice.

Combating a Positive Statement That Is Erroneous.—When an erroneous statement is based on a wrong premise the error should be pointed out. This may be an incorrect statement as when a customer says, "I don't think this will wear well." This objection can be answered by describing the nature of the material out of which the garment is made and the reasons why it will wear.

Retail customers are often unreasonable in the objections they raise as to price and not infrequently are mistaken in the assertion, "Your price is too high." If so the assertion should be tactfully contradicted—as in the following example.

A lady presented a prescription at a drug store and asked how much it would cost to fill it.

"Seventy-five cents," was the reply.

"Why, I had it filled up the street for 50 cents," she exclaimed.

The salesman answered: "In having this prescription filled by us, Madam, you may be absolutely sure that it will contain exactly what the doctor orders. We check over every prescription twice. Two different men handle it so that there is no possibility of making a mistake. If a drug is not fresh and up

to strength we reject it, even if this entails a heavy loss. This means that they are of the strength that the doctor expects them to be. A cheap prescription which is not what the doctor intends, you will admit, is often money thrown away. In view of this service our price is only a fair one and I believe that is the reason why the doctor asked you to come to us."

It will be noticed that in such a statement as this the fact as to the price being high is neither admitted nor even referred to. Instead the salesman offsets "low price" with quality and alludes to his price as "fair." To meet an objection obliquely in this way is often the most effective method. The new train of thought aroused by the new sales argument will often lead the customer to forget his earlier ground of opposition.

The Objection of the Disgruntled Customer.—Sometimes for one reason or another a customer is offended at treatment received from the house on some former occasion and vents his spleen on the salesman. Under these circumstances the only course may be to ask the customer to state the nature of his complaint. If it is reasonable the salesman should undertake to see that the firm makes proper amends; if unreasonable the customer must be tactfully led to look at the matter from the other fellow's point of view. If he will once admit that his grievance is really not based on logical grounds it will vanish. Not infrequently the customer who is reasonable at heart will concede when tactfully handled that his attitude has been needlessly resentful, though it does not follow that this admission will lead to an order.

A salesman representing a packing house accepted the order of the retailer in a small town, but as he was severing his connection with the firm employing him he carelessly neglected the order in many details. The firm made amends for the neglect, but these failed to satisfy the dealer. When a new salesman

called on this customer he was met with abuse and the assertion, "I don't believe in your firm."

After patiently listening to the dealer's grievances the salesman explained that as he had nothing to do with the order and as the firm now considered the matter closed he could do nothing to obtain redress. On his next round a month later he again called on the dealer and chatted for a while in a friendly way. The same thing happened the next month and so on for more than a year. Frequently the salesman gave the dealer some valuable business information picked up on his rounds. Finally after a dozen calls, during none of which was the question of an order once raised, the dealer said to the salesman, "Why do you trouble to call on me? You never solicit."

"No," was the answer, "you told me the first time you saw me that you didn't believe in my concern and I certainly won't ask you to buy goods of a concern you don't believe in."

"Yes, I used to feel pretty sore against your firm," replied the dealer, "but I can't help thinking that if the men like you stay with it as you do, it must be a good house to work for and a good house to trade with. I've got a small order for you today if you want to take it."

The salesman had been patiently waiting for this opportunity. When he left the store with his order he had the satisfaction of knowing that his persistence had resulted in transforming what is usually described as a "knocker" into that most valuable of all assets among customers—a "booster."

CHAPTER XV

EXCUSES AND HOW TO MEET THEM

The Nature of Excuses.—In every sale the customer is pulled two ways. He appreciates the advantage of the offer and would like to profit from it, but he dislikes making the expenditure because a lingering doubt remains as to whether he will not regret it later. If he has no serious objections to raise he temporizes with an excuse.

When the salesman has failed to guide the customer sufficiently far along the course that he wishes the prospect to travel, he finds himself brought to a halt when he seeks to close the sale, with one or more of several stock excuses. These are usually made with the object of temporizing while the customer makes up his mind and need not be taken too seriously. In some cases they may be turned in to reasons for making the purchase; in others they may be tactfully put aside; or they may be ignored altogether.

"I Can't Afford It."—The most common of all excuses is the one, "I can't afford it," or "I haven't got the money." This for obvious reasons is never made by a concern of any standing. If a thing is useful to a business or if there is any profit in it, the purchase can be afforded. The course to follow when the retail shopper raises this objection has been considered in the preceding chapter. Frequently this excuse for not buying is advanced by the small retailer when faced with what seems an expenditure disproportionate to his income, and in this case it really means, "I don't think your proposition offers good enough returns for its cost."

It is obviously useless for the salesman to argue this point. A good course is to reply, "It is natural for you to think you can't afford it, Mr. Lane," or perhaps, better still, to assume that the customer is merely joking, and then proceed with the selling appeal in an endeavor to make the weight of desire overcome the objection.

Examples of Meeting the Excuse, "I Can't Afford It."—As an example, a salesman was trying to sell a check protector to a business man who did not possess such an article. After some discussion the prospect said, "I can't afford one at present." This was obviously insincere.

The salesman replied, "Mr. Brown, do you feel that you can afford your fire insurance?"

"Yes," admitted the customer.

"And yet do you realize that your danger of loss from falsified checks is actually greater in business than your danger of loss from fire? This is proved by statistics. Now for example, . . ." and the salesman continues his argument.

An automobile salesman was finding it difficult to convince a prospect that now was the best time to buy a small motor delivery truck. The customer had assured the salesman that he intended to invest in one as soon as he could afford it, but in the present state of trade he would have to postpone the purchase.

"Mr. Jones," replied the salesman, "the question is not whether you can afford to buy one of our delivery trucks, but whether in these bad times you can afford to do without it. You have gone over these figures with me and you have seen that you make a saving of at least $50 a month compared with the present cost of your three horses and two wagons. You have admitted that one of your wagons is so out of repair that you will probably soon have to replace it and that two of your horses are over 18 years old. Now these horses are not going

to last much longer and they will need to be replaced. At the present price of horse flesh and fodder you will really be throwing good money after bad if you continue to invest capital in something that's going to eat its head off."

"Now you've had considerable experience with horses and you know that while a sound animal fetches a fair price, an animal that is defective in any way goes for next to nothing. Why not cash in on the full value of your present equipment while it is still sound and make the investment in a motor truck *now?*"

The excuse of not being able to afford the expenditure was thus turned into an argument in favor of it. When a saving in expenditure results from the use of anything or where a profit results from resale, the insincerity of this excuse can always be tactfully but firmly revealed in the way shown.

Offering Easy Terms of Payment.—The sincerity of the excuse that a customer cannot afford the expenditure can also be tested when easy terms of payment are offered. Most firms selling a high-priced specialty to people of moderate means usually make concessions of this nature, because experience proves that the objection raised as to the inability to pay means inability to pay a large sum at one time. Sales that would otherwise be lost can frequently be closed when it is agreed that the terms of payment shall be so much on the delivery of of the goods and the balance in easy instalments. Many expensive articles for the home are now sold in this way. The fact that a firm is willing to accept by instalments, after the customer has had an opportunity to inspect the goods, helps to establish that confidence which is necessary for the consummation of a sale in which a relatively large amount is involved.

"I'm Too Busy to Decide Now."—This may be a message delivered by the office boy or girl at the information desk when

the salesman is seeking an interview; in this case it can be handled in the way described in Chapter VI.

This excuse is sometimes advanced toward the end of an interview when the buyer pulls out his watch and notes how quickly time has been passing. As a rule no man lacks the time to do business which he knows will prove profitable. He is in business for that purpose. Therefore when this excuse is offered, the salesman may take it that the buyer has not yet been convinced of the merits of his proposition. The excuse can often be brushed aside with an assertion such as the following:

"Mr. Brown, I know I am taking up a great deal of your time, but we are both in business to make the best use of our time. You have agreed with me that my offer must prove advantageous to you in several ways, and that it is worth your careful consideration. No man is too busy to give any business offer that is to his advantage at least ten minutes of his attention. It will take less than ten minutes for me to enumerate exactly those features of my proposition . . .," or "It will take less than two minutes to draft an order . . .," and the salesman either works back into his sales talk or makes a fresh attempt to close.

"Too Busy to Talk with You Now."—This excuse resembles the preceding excuse, but differs from it in that it is usually made at the opening of an interview especially when a salesman meets the buyer by chance. The prospect has no interest in the offer and is too indifferent to investigate its possibilities. He therefore makes this excuse, which really means, "Don't worry me today, I'm too tired or too lazy to bother with your offer." To such an excuse the salesman may briefly reply as follows:

"I realize that you are a very busy man, Mr. Brown, so I will take up only a few moments of your time. It will need ten minutes to explain just what my proposition means to you.

If you'll give me your close attention for these few minutes I shall be able to prove that your time has been well spent."

Whether or not a salesman wins an interview under these circumstances largely depends upon the confidence with which he presumes that it will be granted. As already explained (Chapter VII), when he meets a prospect on equal ground he will in all probability be listened to. If he seeks an interview apologetically, as if his offer were of little importance, it will receive scant consideration.

"I'll Have to Think It Over."—An excuse frequently raised by the procrastinating type of customer when the time comes to close the sale is that he wishes to have an opportunity to think the matter over. When this phrase is heard the salesman may be sure that his talk has not been sufficiently convincing. The prospect who wants to think the matter over very rarely buys. When left to his own train of thought he will conjure up all sorts of objections because the offer has so far been presented in an inconclusive or indefinite way. When the salesman next calls the opening greeting will probably be, "No, Mr. Blank, I thank you for your call, but I've come to a firm decision not to buy."

Consequently if the salesman is to sell to the prospect who says, "I'll have to think it over," the time to do so is then and there. To such a remark the salesman should promptly reply:

"Now, Mr. Jones, do you really think there is any need to think it over? Aren't you convinced now? If you are not then I am at fault somewhere. Just tell me the point you are still in doubt about."

The prospect will then often acknowledge that for certain reasons he doesn't think the offer is just what he requires. The argument must then be concentrated on removing the particular objection from his mind—directly if possible or else by a powerful appeal to another buying motive sufficiently strong to make him forget the reasons for his wish to procrastinate.

"I'll have to think it over" is frequently heard in the middle of an interview when the customer who only half understands the offer suddenly decides against it and breaks in on the salesman with the above phrase. In such a case the reply may be: "By all means, Mr. Jones, I want you to think it over, but in justice to me and my proposition, before you think it over you ought to allow me to make clear in how many ways you are going to benefit from it in your business. When you do clearly understand its benefits you may possibly think that it needs very little thinking over." And so he continues his sales talk.

"I Must Consult My Partner."—This ancient opposal is usually partly genuine and not without apparent merit. Yet the reply shows its weakness. "Mr. Jeffrey, your partner is not in touch with the case; you are. I feel sure that if you were to take the matter up with him he would listen for a moment and then say, 'You think it's what we want?' And to your assent he would reply, 'Well, you know all about it, I've never seen it and don't pretend to understand it. If you think it is a good idea, go ahead.' So as a matter of fact why shouldn't you do now what he will propose you should do in any case?"

"Suppose You Call Again."—An objection in many respects analogous to the offer to "think it over" is the remark at the close of the interview, "Yes, I'm interested. But suppose you call again. I'm rather busy now."

Such a postponement will do no harm to the wholesale salesman who may be covering the same ground within a week or a month. He can use his present call as a means of establishing friendly relations by genially replying:

"All right, Mr. Jones, I certainly will call again when next in town because I know if you are not in immediate need of anything in my line at present, you certainly will be in a week or two."

An answer such as this may be good business policy in the case of a sale of staples, but would not do at all when selling a specialty. When confronted with this objection the specialty salesman should candidly say to his customer:

"Mr. Jones, I'm a busy man just as you are and I have to work hard for a living and show results. I have to call on a certain number of customers in a day and having once worked a town I don't come back to it for months or years.

"Now you as a business man know there is no better time to do business than to do it *now*, and here I am right on the spot. You have asked me to call again only because you are not quite clear about some point in my offer and possibly want to study the literature I have given you. Just let me enumerate some of the points previously mentioned," and the salesman swings back into his selling talk by recapitulating those arguments which he thinks will prove most effective.

"Stop In on Your Next Trip and Perhaps We'll Do Business."—This like the two preceding excuses is another of those "put off" phrases which are used by the vacillating customer who hasn't the moral courage to come out with a downright "No." This excuse is rarely heard when the salesman has succeeded in arousing real interest. In consequence the obvious answer is to meet this objection with a strong selling talk as to the merits of the offer.

"Mr. Brown," the salesman may say, "if you want these goods at all you want them for the profit they will earn you. By putting off your order until my next trip, which will be at least three months from now, you are losing the profit you might make on my goods during these three months. Let us figure what this amounts to. . . ."

Excuses advanced as reasons for procrastinating imply that the salesman has failed to arouse desire. In each case the answer must be so worded that he is able to pass behind the

objection and proceed anew with those arguments he thinks best suited to the temperament of the buyer.

Talk from the Customer's Viewpoint.—In all the salesman's replies to these numerous objections and excuses he should answer from the point of view of the customer. For example, when the excuse is made, "I will think it over," the reply should not be, "Well, I would like to have you decide now, Mr. Brown, because I am here and am anxious to get the matter settled." It is better to word the answer in this way, "You are doing yourself an injustice, Mr. Brown, unless you come to a prompt decision. You have me here completely at your disposal. My time is yours. Why not get the matter settled now?"

Finding a Point of Agreement.—As mentioned in the preceding chapter, an invariable rule of salesmanship is never openly to contradict a prospect. No one likes to have his opinions disputed. The salesman can generally find some point in the objection to which he can assent and then, starting with the point of agreement, he can swing around to the answer he wishes to make.

For example, if the objection or excuse is made, "It is too much trouble to add a new line," it would be tactless to reply, "Well, that is no reason why you can't trade with us." Instead the salesman answers:

"Yes, it is some bother, I know, to put in a new line. And yet, Mr. Jones, if you had carried out that idea all the time you have been in business you would not have such a fine stock or be such a successful merchant as you are now. In these days small stocks and many lines gives the maximum returns on your investment. Just consider how much profit in proportion to your other lines this proposition will pay you," and the salesman proceeds to emphasize the point of profit. In this way he

switches the thought of the customer from trouble, which is disagreeable, to the desire for profit, which is much more pleasant. In proportion as the case for profit is proven up to the hilt, so will the objection raised on the score of trouble fade away.

A prospect when offered a duplicating machine might object, "I haven't any use for it." A flat contradiction would be, "Yes, you have, only you don't know it." Instead the salesman tactfully replies, "I can quite appreciate why you say that, Mr. Robinson. It is natural for you to think that you have no use for this machine, as many other business men who are now using it once thought. I have not yet had the opportunity of familiarizing you with the many services that this machine accomplishes. Let me first explain its uses to you and then you will be able to form a correct judgment as to whether or not you will have any use for it."

Others objections that must not be answered directly are those which claim that a competitor's goods are superior in some way. This has been discussed in the chapter on "Desire" (XI). At this point it is only necessary to recall that the salesman need not feel discouraged when this objection is raised. It must be remembered that no article can be superior to competitive goods in every way and in every detail. Some points of superiority can be found for both. The salesman's aim should be to present a larger number of facts in favor of his own offer.

Sometimes the excuse may not relate to the goods so much as to the service which accompanies them. A customer may argue, "No, I don't intend to give you an order, because I find that we can get quicker delivery from Smith and Company and so I don't have to buy such large quantities at a time." To answer such objections as these a knowledge of local conditions is needed and for this reason they need not be considered at length here.

Sufficient has thus far been written to explain that a salesman's success will depend in large degree upon careful preparation and practice in meeting objections and excuses. The reply must be carefully worded, the reasoning must be sound, and the argument must be delivered with tactful emphasis and without a trace of hesitation or apology. To hesitate or apologize where courage and persistence are needed is fatal. Only adequate preparation will enable the salesman to meet objections and excuses with the positive assurance needed to sweep them aside.

CHAPTER XVI

THE DIPLOMACY OF THE CLOSE

The Difficulty of Landing the Order.—The "close," as the acceptance of the offer is termed, is frequently referred to as the hardest part of the sale to negotiate. When the time comes for the buyer to say "Yes" or "No" the nervous salesman, who reveals his anxiety to secure an order, may lose many a sale which seems within his grasp. But the man who studies the art of closing as he studies every other phase of salesmanship, and cooly faces this critical part of the interview, will find no serious difficulty in bringing it to its logical conclusion.

Buyers often grant an interview, listen to the sales talk, criticize the arguments, and raise objections, real or imaginary —all without any serious intention of giving an order. Then becoming interested, as they realize the advantages of the proposition, they feel half-inclined to try it out, though they may have had no intention of doing so at the opening of the interview.

If under these circumstances the attitude of the salesman is at all hesitant when the time comes to close and ask for an order, the chances are that the half-decided customer will draw back. In order to help him to come to the point the salesman must always assume that his argument is wholly convincing and that there is no question but that the offer will be accepted. The mere fact that the prospect listens and assents to the claims and statements made presupposes the final decision to buy. Therefore when the salesman considers that the merits of the offer have been explained in sufficient detail he should seek to

bring the interview to a close by introducing the subject of an order.

The "Psychological Moment."—Much has been written about what is termed the "psychological moment" to close. A particular moment is supposed to arrive somewhere near the end of the argument, when the mind of the customer will be enthusiastically in favor of the offer. For a brief moment he will clearly realize its benefits! Pseudo-scientific salesmanship presumes the ability to sense this particular moment, pounce upon it, and utilize it for the purpose of securing the buyer's signature to an irrevocable contract in a moment of irrational and unguarded enthusiasm.

This psychological moment exists largely in imagination. About half the customers approached definitely make up their minds while the other half wobble mentally. If the skilful presentation of the offer convinces the buyer that it fits in with his particular needs and he has that mental strength which enables him to come to a prompt decision, he himself may bring the interview to a close by saying he will order so much of this, that, or the other. If he belongs to the type which naturally procrastinates and finds it difficult to decide, he may need to be reassured upon many points before the sale is closed.

The art of closing is the ability to find out when and for what reason the customer is still reluctant to buy. He is then reassured upon these points which cause his indecision, until he acquires that complete confidence in the all-round advantages of the proposition which leads to a close.

To be on the alert, like a cat watching for a mouse, for a particular buying wave to pass through the prospect's mind savors more of securing an order by means of trickery than by logical and skilful discussion. There is only one psychological moment for closing—when the merits of the offer have been made so attractive to the cautious or doubting prospect

that the suggestion to order, when made with sufficient firmness and diplomacy, suffices to tip the scale in favor of the purchase.

Closing Merely the Final Decision.—Thus the close is in no sense a water-tight compartment separated from the rest of the sales transaction. What the salesman does throughout the interview is to secure a series of decisions leading to the final one. The close is merely a more critical decision which requires more tact and firmness.

For example, in the bread sale detailed in the chapter on the "Preparation of the Sales Talk" (Chapter V), assent is first secured to the assertion that bread in general is a profitable line to handle. From this the dealer is led to acknowledge the particular advantages of handling an advertised bread which sells more readily than an unknown brand. Just how much profit is to be made by handling White's Cream Bread is then figured out, based on the earnings of other dealers. The argument takes the form of facts and figures which cannot be disputed. Having made the main appeal to profit, the talk as a whole can now be summarized by such a remark as, "This makes a very interesting proposition, doesn't it, Mr. Jones? Suppose you make your order two dozen loaves a day to begin with. That would be about right, wouldn't it?"

This observation is made merely as a "feeler." If the customer draws back and says that he is not prepared to accept the offer the salesman continues his argument regardless of the mental opposition. This time the prestige of handling a well-known brand is referred to and the advertising co-operation offered by the firm as a means of building up trade is explained in detail. If the dealer still remains non-committal the salesman tries again:

"Suppose I put in two dozen loaves a day to start with, Mr. Brown, and then as soon as possible you can make out that list of people to whom we may send the sample loaves."

By assuming that the last argument must have convinced the grocer of the advantages of selling his bread the salesman makes another attempt to close. But he carefully refrains from putting his offer in the form of a direct query which will permit the dealer to turn it down with an uncompromising "No."

As another illustration, suppose that the customer is a retailer who is buying shirts. He first acknowledges that the shirts offered are attractive in design; then he is assured that the colors will last; the next decision to which he comes is that they will suit the particular trade of his customers; the price he decides is reasonable and the terms are as good as he can obtain elsewhere. Thus when the time comes to buy, his final decision is bolstered up by a series of smaller ones. The close is not a detached mental process wholly alien to the rest of the selling talk but a natural development based on the other decisions. When the salesman seeks to close he does so naturally and without the slightest hesitancy in this way:

"Will ten dozen of these in assorted sizes and patterns be enough for you, Mr. Brown?"

He assumes that the order will follow as a natural sequence to his sales talk.

The Importance of Assuming the Order.—To assume that an order will surely be given is an important point to remember in every attempt to close. A customer is much more readily led to the buying point if he is impressed with the fact that order-taking is part of the every-day routine of a salesman's interview. When an anxiety to close is revealed and the prospect thinks he is being urged to sign or to order against his better judgment, he at once becomes cautious and draws back. But when the salesman assumes that the order is merely a routine matter which is the inevitable outcome of the interview, this attitude helps the hesitating buyer to make up his mind Thus when a stationer asks a certain fountain pen

salesman at the close of his sales talk a question of any kind such as, "What are your terms?" the salesman replies, "Sixty days net. Two off ten." Then, taking out his order blank he continues, "No, suppose we start with this style, say two dozen to begin with?"

When selling at retail it is frequently necessary to help the customer to come to a decision in this way. For instance, a man is buying a suit of clothes. He manifests a desire for a particular suit by studying it for a long time, but cannot make up his mind. He takes it off and tries on another. This he quickly rejects. The salesman notices this and asks him to try on the first suit again. When this is done he calls over the tailor and says, "Mr. Smith, will you kindly see what alterations are necessary on this?"—and the tailor begins to take the measurements. The making out of the sales slip usually follows.

Avoid the Negative Question Close.—To frame the suggestion of an order in the form of a query is never advisable. For instance, questions such as, "How about taking your order for some of each kind, Mr. Brown?" or "May I book your order for a shipment?" court a negative answer and an opening is given for a refusal. In the examples in the preceding sections there is no such opening, the presumption being that the order is as good as given. All that remains is to determine the number of loaves, the assortment in sizes and patterns of shirts, and so on.

A salesman in a meat store when asked for a pound of steak cuts off a pound and one-half. "Will that be too much?" he asks the customer. She replies, "Yes, that will," and he then has to cut off the extra weight.

Were he to say "That will be about right, I think?" and look at his customer inquiringly the probabilities are that she would reply, "Yes."

To a customer who has just made a purchase the query, "Will that be all today?" invites the answer "Yes." An intelligent salesperson invariably asks, "What is the next thing, please?" implying that another purchase is a natural sequence of events.

Positive Assertions Help the Close.—The close of a sale will be more readily brought about if the claims and statements that lead up to it have been made positive or have elicited positive replies from the customer. A salesman expresses himself positively when he shows that his goods are better than those of his competitors—not that his competitor's are inferior to his. When he concedes certain merits to a competitor's lines he enhances the value of his own. The retail salesman when showing two articles to be used for the same purpose states that one is a good article for the price, but that the other is superior or better for certain reasons. The clothing salesman instead of saying, "This suit will not wear as well as that," says rather, "This suit has good wearing qualities but the other will outlast it by a long time." The salesman who says, "I don't suppose you are interested in buying anything today?" is suggesting a negative idea. It is obviously much better to ask, "What are you in the market for today?"

In the same way when the time comes to close a sale the customer will be more readily brought to the point of ordering by such a remark as, "You will be wise to buy these goods now. Six dozen of each kind ought not to be too much for you," rather than, "You will be foolish to miss this opportunity. How many may I send you?"

A little thought will enable the salesman to change the wording of all closing queries so that they are made in the form of positive assertions. These assume that the order will be given as a matter of course and this assumption has a powerful effect upon the mind of the procrastinating buyer.

Picture the Customer Using the Goods.—A customer who evidently likes the goods and yet still hesitates, can often be brought to the buying point when an appeal is made to his imagination, by picturing him using the goods or profiting from the offer. This appeal to the imagination is especially necessary when the expenditure is large in proportion to the size of the purchaser's income.

For example, when the buyer of an automobile is accompanied by his wife, the salesman should paint a "word-picture" of the ease and comfort of riding in the car, the enjoyment of its swift motion, the health-giving qualities of pure and exhilarating country air, and the education to be derived from visiting places of interest for miles round.

The retail merchant's imagination can be appealed to by depicting the goods in his store, the fine display they will make on his shelves, and their final sale to customers for their satisfaction and his profit.

A strong appeal can often be made to the pride of the shopper, who can be imaginatively depicted wearing the stylish pair of shoes or the becoming suit or coat which he or she is contemplating buying. To bring the hesitating shopper to the buying point, further indirect allusions may be made to the flattering comments that the article will probably arouse when friends inspect it.

All these are mental pictures which can readily be conjured up when the expenditure is so important that it tends to create indecision. The more naturally and enthusiastically the pictures are drawn, the better the chance of bringing a sale of any importance to a close.

Example of Appealing to the Imagination.—An employee working in the office of a wholesale house was interested in a course in salesmanship issued by a well-known correspondence school. He had asked for information, but when the salesman

called he refused to give a definite decision. In an effort to close the salesman appealed to the young man's imagination in this way:

"Mr. Marsh, you acknowledge that one of your ambitions is to be promoted by your firm to an outside position. Now, think of yourself starting out with your sample case. You have studied this course and have thoroughly mastered it. You understand how to meet customers' objections, how to argue, how to close the sale. You will go out with a firm step and your head high because you will have full confidence in your power to meet people and sell to them.

"Well, Mr. Marsh, you can start tomorrow. You can begin preparing yourself for promotion and so help yourself to deserve it. When you are ready be sure the position will be ready for you. I have filled out your enrolment application. If you will sign here the first lesson will be addressed to your home tomorrow and you can start your studies right away."

Taking an application blank from his coat pocket the salesman wound up, "Let me see, what is your address?"

Here is a definite picture which appeals to ambition. The young man sees himself on the high road to promotion, with a sample case in his hand, his step firm, his heart full of confidence. With a pleasant prospect like this before him other considerations, such as the relatively high cost and the time and effort involved in study, fade into insignificance. The mental picture appeals to the motives of desiring to excel, desire for knowledge, love of praise, and so forth; it creates so powerful a desire to profit from the offer that the sale is immediately closed.

When a First Attempt to Close Fails.—When the first or even the second attempt is made to secure a favorable decision and the customer hesitates without definitely refusing to buy, there is still every prospect of making the sale. In all prob-

ability the hesitation is due to the fact that complete mental assent has not been given to all the claims made. To secure this assent the salesman can make a summary of the arguments already used and present them in a series of questions worded to draw an affirmative reply. Or, alternatively, he can accentuate a special talking point and develop it if he thinks that an appeal to a particular motive may prove more efficacious.

Example of a Change of Tactics.—An automobile salesman after appealing to the imagination by depicting all the delights of owning a motor car vainly tried to close. The hesitating customer refused to give a definite order and insisted that he required time to think the matter over. The salesman thereupon changed his tactics:

"Mr. Smith," he said, "I really believe you wish to think over this proposition, because in your own mind you are not sure whether or not you are justified in incurring this expenditure. You have had no experience so far in running a car and possibly you think that its up-keep and the cost of tires will make a bigger hole in your income than you expect. Now, tell me what you estimate it would cost you to run this car? In all probability you've already figured it out."

The salesman shrewdly guessed that he had been appealing to the wrong motive. He judged that the type of buyer in front of him had decided to spend so much for the car and allow so much for its up-keep and running cost. The customer acknowledged that he expected the up-keep of the car would run to at least $10 a week.

"How often do you expect to use the car? Is it for business purposes or pleasure?"

"Oh, it is purely for pleasure," replied the customer.

"In that case then you will use it principally on Saturday afternoon, Sunday, and on vacation days?"

"Yes," again acknowledged the customer.

"Well, a fair distance to cover on a Saturday afternoon would be about 50 miles and 100 will be the limit on Sunday. So let us see what it will cost us to run this car 150 miles a week, which would be a good average for the whole year."

Thereupon the salesman put facts and figures before his customer to prove that even if he traveled the maximum distance weekly and allowed a liberal margin for repairs and tire renewal the car that he was considering would not cost in up-keep more than $8 a week. A sale promptly followed.

The Final Closing Argument.—When the salesman lays particular stress on a point or a motive that obviously appeals to a particular temperament he causes this point to assume such prominence in the buyer's mind that it overwhelms all the objections that may hinder the close. When, however, the closing appeal cannot be made to a particular motive, it will be necessary to enumerate all the strong points which the customer has previously accepted as true. In doing this there is no necessity to repeat the former arguments; all that is needed is a summing up. And of course, those appeals that exerted but little or no influence are best omitted.

Each point should be made to stand out clearly and luminously. In this way all favorable impressions so far received are centered so that each is seen in its relation to the others and the whole proposition gains the strength of unity and completeness. The mind must be systematically prepared for the close by leading from one statement to another, the interest growing as the argument progresses. The enumeration of the strong points of the offer will then present such a vivid conception of the advantages of the deal that in the majority of cases little difficulty will be experienced in securing the buyer's unhesitating consent.

CHAPTER XVII

THINGS TO REMEMBER WHEN CLOSING

The Importance of Managing the Interview.—Many a sale interview fails to reach a successful close because the conversation is allowed to drift away from business into talk concerning affairs in general or some social matters or events. These little side excursions, if not too prolonged, are profitable, for as a rule they create a feeling of friendliness and mutual understanding. And once the stage of interest is past and that of desire has been entered, any deviation from the systematic progress of the argument is to be most carefully avoided. In some cases, however, especially in the case of the garrulous type of buyer who loves the sound of his own voice, a discussion of trivial and irrelevant matters often leads so far from business that it is almost impossible for the salesman to draw the mind of the buyer back to the main discussion. When a customer is allowed to take the bit between his teeth in this way the salesman cannot say what he would like to say, namely, that he has no time to discuss subjects that are irrelevant to his proposition. He must follow the prospect's lead, waiting for an opportunity to steer the conversation tactfully to the main track which leads to decision.

Keeping the Prospect on the Track.—There are several ways of recalling the wanderer to realities. After the salesman has revealed the interest that courtesy demands in what his prospect has to say, one method is to refrain from making any further comments even to the extent of saying "Yes" or "No."

If he will look the talker straight in the face and merely nod in assent or shake his head when questions are put to him, the monologue will soon die down. As soon as a pause occurs, the salesman skilfully leads the customer back into the main stream in this fashion:

"What you have told me, Mr. Jones, is very interesting and some other time I would like to know more about it; but I must not take up your time now. You were asking something about our terms that I ought to explain. . . ."

When the garrulity of a customer is apparently unlimited the first opportunity to break in must be seized with such a remark as, "Yes, I thoroughly agree with you, Mr. Jones. Don't you think me rude if I break in, but before I forget it I want you to understand thoroughly that part of my offer . . ." Conversation which is beside the point is thus interrupted and the customer is tactfully led back to a main issue.

The most simple of all methods is that of a salesman who makes a practice of reading the local papers in every town he visits. He scans the columns for news items which he thinks will be of general interest. Then if it becomes necessary to interrupt a customer who has wandered from the point, the salesman breaks in upon the conversation with a by-the-way request for information as to how or why certain things are being done in the town.

Diplomacy of this kind is often essential if the object of the call is to be kept in view. If the talkative buyer is given the impression that the salesman's only thought is to discuss business and sell goods, a feeling, if not of resentment, at least of slightly wounded pride, is created. The feeling is adverse to closing the sale.

How Much to Sell When Closing.—A problem with which the man who is selling at wholesale is sometimes faced is the quantity of goods to be sold in a given case. As has been

previously pointed out, an error of judgment frequently made by the inexperienced is to sell more than the buyer can profitably use. This mistake rarely happens in the specialty field, because a specialty is not bought in quantity for resale but purely for use. But when selling for resale, especially if the line is new to the dealer, when the time comes to close there is often danger of overloading inexperienced customers who by nature are optimistic.

In this field the profits depend largely on the number of times the stock is turned in the course of a year. Dead stock represents a large loss and many retail failures can be more or less directly traced to this cause. A man often goes into retail business with little knowledge of the field; he fails to study demand; he has no proper system of accounting and is ignorant of the cost of doing business. When he buys a certain quantity on the advice of an inexperienced or unscrupulous salesman and then finds that the goods move much more slowly than he was led to expect, and that in consequence they deteriorate, he naturally feels resentful.

When to Sell the Whole Line.—On the other hand, poor judgment or lack of courage is revealed when the diffident salesman fails to sell the quantity which he believes the buyer can use before the time of the next call comes around. It must be remembered that in wholesale selling it frequently costs more to win over a new customer than the profit on the first sale amounts to. Especially is this the case when a particular article is featured as an entering wedge. Having made an initial sale, elementary intelligence will at once suggest that this is a golden opportunity to make additional sales. More or less friendly relations have been established with the buyer; the first purchase signifies that his approval has been won; in consequence he is in a receptive mood. Therefore, it is legitimate for the salesman who handles an extensive line to

use every argument of the buyer's purchasing from the whole line.

Closing with a Cautious, Doubting Buyer.—When closing the sale with an apprehensive, hesitating customer different tactics are needed. First estimating the quantity that the dealer ought to dispose of in a given period, the salesman suggests an amount rather above it. The natural impulse of the cautious dealer is to begin conservatively and take no chances. If the decision as to quantity is left to him he is just as likely to find himself out of stock with no opportunity to refill, as the optimistic type is likely to be oversold. Therefore, when in contact with an extremely cautious type of customer the salesman should mention an amount considerably more than the dealer would ordinarily buy.

The manager for a wholesale drug company noticed that one of his salesmen secured larger orders than other men for a special line which was offered in $5, $10, and $25 assortments. When asked how he managed it the salesman replied:

"This is a new line. The dealer does not realize its selling possibilities. So I talk to him always about the value of a $50 assortment. This as a rule is rather more than he thought of investing in this particular line. When the time comes to close and I finally suggest a $25 assortment, the amount seems so reasonable that it is bought without hesitation. The average dealer is not oversold when he buys this quantity. Our other men after mentioning $5 and $10 assortments try unsuccessfully to sell the druggist assortments at the higher price—and fail."

The Signing of a Contract.—In the sale of expensive specialties, from an office device to an advertising order, some form of contract must usually be signed. It frequently happens that the prospect views the offer favorably and is carefully con-

sidering it—until the contract is placed before him. Then he draws back simply through his dislike to bind himself in this irrevocable way.

When an objection of this kind is raised at the close of a sale the salesman can meet it in this way:

"I know, Mr. Blank, that there are many business men who dislike signing contracts and I also know that your word is absolutely as good as your bond. But still you will admit that verbal agreements, especially when making a sale of any importance, are not businesslike.

"Now, we on our part have just as much to do in filling the contract as you have in accepting it. In this contract it states that we will furnish you with a certain kind of machine at a certain price; the terms of delivery and payment are here in black and white, so that any future misunderstanding is impossible. You note that this contract calls for one of our latest improved machines and also contains a guarantee to keep it in repair. Therefore, it is as much for your own as for our protection. A contract such as this cannot be objectional to any business man because it binds us just as much as it does you." Treatment such as this is readily developed for every variety of circumstance.

A contract of any kind usually involves writing out certain details. Therefore, the best method of closing is to lead up to the filling in of these details in a natural way, taking for granted that the formality is a necessary part of the ordering. Under no circumstances should the contract be held in reserve until the last moment and then sprung upon the customer as a surprise.

As an example, the cash register salesman when the time comes to close, extracts an order blank from his pocket and says:

"Now, Mr. Blank, what style of finish would you like on the register? Our usual finish is in gold, but we also make

one in nickel and one in dark bronze. You see we fill in here on the order form the style of finish you desire. On the back (turning is over) is where we fill in the style of name-plate. I must explain that your order includes a name-plate with this machine. Have you a business card so that I can get your initials or the firm name correct?"

In this way the merchant gradually sees that an order is to be made out and that in consequence it will be necessary for him to sign it. But the fact that it contains details of the goods ordered suggests to him that this is only customary routine.

Rebates and Discounts at the Close.—A stumbling block which frequently trips up the salesman when the time comes to close is that relating to a discount or a rebate. The customer may have agreed that the goods are what he needs, that he likes them, and that he is inclined to buy; but at the last moment he turns around and says to the salesman something like this, "Your prices are all right and are the same as those of Swain and Company. But I have always been given a 5 per cent discount at the end of 30 days by that firm and of course you are ready to do the same."

This may be only a "try-out" or it may be perfectly true. The salesman, unless he knows the business policy of the firm mentioned, has no means of ascertaining whether it is true or not. The inexperienced man in his anxiety to secure an order at any cost will frequently cut his own commission, if he receives one, or allow a rebate if this is possible in order to close the sale.

This practice can never be recommended. The salesman presumably represents a house with definite terms as to payment and discounts. He should state what these terms are and then affirm emphatically and definitely that he must adhere to the policy of the house. In nine cases out of ten the customer will accept the usual terms.

The inexperienced salesman must remember that the shrewd buyer is always striving to secure the best terms possible both as to price, length of credit, and discount. His mental attitude is that "there is no harm in trying it." But if he is pleased with the goods and thinks that they will either serve his purpose in some way, or are the best among those offered to him —which must be the case when the buyer signifies that he has decided to buy—then the final terms as to discount and length of credit have very little bearing on the close of the sale.

The practice in many cases, especially in selling to the retailer, is to grant an ascending scale of discounts which vary with the amount of the order. Frequently the dealer will ask for the concession of a large discount applied to a smaller quantity, and may even hold out for these terms. The salesman who represents a firm of standing, with a definite and fixed credit policy, usually turns down such attempts to gain further concessions by a frank explanation that his terms are positively so and so and that they are the same for all customers alike. The salesman who represents an unknown house will find that attempts are very often made to secure concessions and rebates of this nature. Whether or not he grants them must be determined by the policy of the house he represents.

When Obstacles Arise to Prevent a Sale.—Sometimes after an order is accepted, even when a customer has signed a contract, he refuses to carry out his agreement. This may happen because of misrepresentation, since the advantages of the offer have been exaggerated; or because the customer has been cajoled into buying against his will; or it may be due to timidity and indecision. Whatever the cause, diplomacy will be needed when the salesman calls to find out the nature of the trouble and bring the customer back to the buying frame of mind.

If there has been no misrepresentation and the only explanation given by the customer is that he has "changed his mind," the presumption is that he was only half sold on the proposition at the first interview. The policy of the salesman will then be to seek a second interview and ask the customer pointblank just why he is doubtful as to the benefits he will derive from the purchase. In this interview it is much better to go straight to the point. The salesman is in an advantageous position, because he is entitled to an explanation from a man who breaks a contract even if only a verbal one. If the customer is merely suffering from nervousness at the thought of the expenditure, the salesman should have little difficulty in restimulating his desire through contact with his own enthusiasm. If the reason advanced is that something has happened meanwhile that makes it impossible or inconvenient for the customer to accept the goods, the salesman must use his resource and his special knowledge in an effort to find a way around the difficulty.

An Example of Resource in Closing.—The importance of resource in such a sale crisis as this is illustrated by the following anecdote:

An insurance salesman after several interviews with an obdurate client who, though he had signified his intention of buying insurance still refused to come to the point, at last closed a policy for $20,000. When the signature was finally obtained the salesman felt sure that there would be no further hitch as his client was in the best of health, young, and had only recently been married.

A few days later to his surprise he heard that the medical adviser for the company had failed to turn in his report as to the result of the physical examination. The salesman went to the medical officer to find out what was wrong, as the young prospect when last seen seemed to be in perfect health. The doctor told him that the client resolutely refused to answer a

vital question in the application form which every buyer of insurance must fill out, and until this question was answered the doctor could not complete his report to the company. The question referred to asked for information as to the cause of death of the prospect's father.

When the salesman called in order to ascertain why an answer to this question had been refused he was told in confidence that the father of his client had been hanged as a spy during the Civil War; as this secret had apparently died with him, under no circumstances would the prospect bring it to life again.

At this unexpected difficulty the salesman was at first nonpulsed. After a moment's quick and concentrated reflection a look of relief spread over his face.

"Oh, I can fix that all right for you. Give me the blank."

The salesman then wrote in the space provided for the answer to the question "cause of death of your father": "Fell from a scaffold; death instantaneous."

"You won't object to this, will you?" said the salesman as he showed it to his client.

"No, that just about covers it all right," was the reply.

The blank went through, the policy was issued, and the salesman collected his commission.

A little resource in emergencies is a distinguishing mark of the alert salesman.

CHAPTER XVIII

FRIENDLY RELATIONS WITH THE BUYER

Friendship Often an Essential Factor in Making Sales.—A leather salesman had been calling on a shoe manufacturer month after month for two years, and during that time had received only a few trifling orders. On the rare occasion when the buyer granted an interview, his manner was gruff, abrupt, and almost discourteous. The interview invariably ended with the refrain, "No, nothing more today. This is absolutely all I need in your line."

One day the salesman chanced to meet the buyer in a street car, attentively studying a seedman's catalogue. "Beautiful weather for planting a garden, isn't it?" he said genially as he sat down.

"Yes," was the reply, "I left the office early to put in an extra hour's work on mine."

The salesman, being an enthusiastic gardener himself, knew something about the growing of plants and flowers. An interesting conversation ensued which, before the ride terminated, developed into a feeling of mutual friendliness. Within a week the salesman made a point of calling upon the dealer and opened his interview with the words, "Well, how's the garden today?" An exchange of agricultural lore followed, and when the two separated the salesman carried away with him his first substantial order.

This anecdote illustrates the point that in many cases the only possible road to the buyer's favor is to cultivate friendly relations. The salesman may determine the best motive to

appeal to in a particular case; he may study his customer's characteristics; he may arrange his sales talk accordingly; but if his goods are much like those of his competitors and offer nothing exceptional in price or quality, he will often find buyers cold and indifferent. The reception may be more cordial to the representative of a prominent house that stands above its competitors, but a salesman whose house does not enjoy the esteem or admiration of the buyer must expect to meet indifference. Under these circumstances the best course may be to forget the proposition and all its details for the time being and to concentrate upon the cultivation of friendly relations at every call.

A paper salesman called on a publisher eighteen times before he received an order. Seldom did he mention paper, the majority of the visits were short, affording a few moments of pleasant chat on any of a dozen topics that the two enjoyed. When at last the publisher had occasion for a new style of paper, he called up his friend, the salesman, at once.

The Importance of First Impressions.—This friendliness is, as a rule, the natural sequence of an opening order and satisfactory results therefrom. But the difficulty of the salesman in many cases is to secure the opening. Once obtained, he hopes that his own personality plus the merits of the goods will enable him to develop a trial order into a permanent and lucrative connection.

Much therefore depends upon the impression he makes on his first visit. If this impression is favorable, a feeling of good-will is established, which inclines the buyer to look for reasons why he should buy. When such reasons are sought for, they are not difficult to find. If the opposite feeling is aroused, if for some reason the salesman's manner or method of approach do not please him, the customer tends to be exacting and critical and is frequently unreasonable in the objections

he raises against the goods. This attitude of mind is an effectual barrier against forming a new connection.

Geniality the First Essential.—It is of first importance in the cultivation of friendly relations that the salesman himself shall feel genuinely friendly toward others. An honest wish to please, a feeling of real interest in other people and the desire to help them, a willingness to put oneself to personal trouble or inconvenience in order to be helpful—qualities such as these radiate an atmosphere which other people instinctively like and which makes them ready to listen to the salesman and co-operate with him. Before other people will like you, you must like them. First in importance in cultivating friendly relations is geniality—a desire to be friendly and to please.

How Geniality Can be Revealed.—This definition of genialty leads to a discussion of how it may be revealed. One method which every salesman can practice is to think of means of rendering, not only the service which should go with the goods, but additional service — a "something extra" the customer does not expect.

A lady entered a drug store and asked the salesman to give her something to cure an inflamed eye. The salesman, noting that the ailment was serious, suggested that it would be wiser and safer for her to consult a doctor. She accepted his advice. He then offered to call up the doctor's office and find out if he was in. The doctor replied that he could see her if she came around immediately. The salesman suggested a taxicab and immediately rang for one on the telephone. Gratitude for the service which was not expected was the natural result—and gratitude is one form of friendliness.

The Importance of "Service-Plus."—The foregoing incident illustrates what is known in the language of salesmanship

as "service-plus." Most salesmen are reasonably polite and obliging to the extent of taking trouble and putting themselves to inconvenience when opportunity offers. A salesman who wishes to cultivate the friendliness of his customers must seek opportunities to render this service-plus.

Service-plus comprises not only an earnest and intelligent desire to sell what can be profitably used and thus afford satisfaction, but also a sincere wish to attend to requests or preferences in minor matters which do not always seem of importance when the mind is wholly concentrated upon making a sale. A salesman who remembers every trifling wish or instruction expressed by the buyer, even though not included in the terms of the sale, is adopting one of the most effective means of cultivating permanent, friendly relations. If, in addition, he is able when asked to give advice which can be relied upon, his hold on the esteem of his customer is proportionally strengthened.

Examples of Service-Plus.—The superintendent of a large department store chanced to be in the clothing department when a salesman arrived to interview the buyer. The salesman represented one of the largest wholesale manufacturers of clothing in the country. As the expenditure for that department formed a considerable item, the manager remained to help the buyer, if necessary, with his judgment. The buyer continually asked the salesman for advice as to selections and quantities and purchased freely—rather to the surprise of the manager who expected him to distribute his orders among other salesmen.

After the order was finally made up and the salesman had retired, the manager questioned the buyer and said to him, "Why did you buy so freely and trust the judgment of the salesman more than your own."

"Because I have learned it pays to do so," was the reply.

"Last year when he called he told me that if he were in my place he would load up on the 'pinch-back' and one or two other styles, which I finally did at his suggestion. You know that at the end of the season we had fewer 'left-overs' in our department than in any previous year. Yet, had I followed my own judgment, we should have been short of our best sellers by several thousand dollars before the end of December, and overloaded in other lines. I have taken his advice as to styles on one or two other occasions and I have always found it right. As he attends to my instructions in every detail and goes out of his way to please me, I give him all the orders I can."

Sometimes the service may have nothing at all to do with the goods or their delivery, and if so it can be rendered with even more telling effect.

A traveling candy salesman reached one of his prospects late on Saturday afternoon. He found the storekeeper greatly rushed because of a special sale he was holding. As the salesman intended to stay in the town over Sunday, without any words he helped himself to a white linen jacket which hung in an unobtrusive corner of the store, then took up his position behind the counter and began to wait on customers. In former days he had served his apprenticeship in a candy store, and so he proved himself as deft and competent a salesman as any other man behind the counter. Needless to say, this action resulted in cementing the feeling of firm friendliness.

Reveal Interest in What Others Do.—A telling method of cultivating friendly relations is to look for an opportunity to show interest in something done by another person. One salesman calling upon retailers makes it a practice to scrutinize closely the window displays and interior arrangement of his customers' stores. When he notes any changes he comments upon them. "That is a fine display you have in the window," he may remark. "Who is responsible for it? It must have

cost you a lot of time and trouble"; or, "I like this new arrangement of your fixtures. It's certainly a big improvement." Every retailer, as a rule, is pleased with his own window dressing and store arrangement. He is gratified to find that other persons, particularly strangers, take notice of what he is doing.

Look for a Ground of Common Interest.—Most men have a hobby of some kind. We are gratified when, in discussing things in which we are interested, we find that our tastes coincide with those of others. If the salesman can find out what his customer cares for and turn the conversation around to that subject, so much the better. A hobby is usually a topic of paramount interest to the person who rides it. The more intelligently the salesman can discuss it the more gratified his listener will be.

For example, golf may be the hobby in one case. The salesman can then steer the conversation around to bunkers and greens, where he and his customer can meet on common ground. The topic, which is of perennial interest to its devotees, can easily be broached by asking for information about the local links, the kind of course, the lowest score ever made by the customer, and so on.

A salesman had on several occasions called without result on a prospective customer whose hobby was photography. During this period the salesman also became interested in the art. His first attempts included, as is usually the case, many poor pictures and some complete failures. On his next visit, instead of broaching the business side of his call, he adroitly steered the conversation around photography. "I understand, Mr. Sherman," he said, "that you are an expert photographer. I bought a camera a few weeks ago but I've not yet succeeded in getting good pictures. Perhaps you will be good

enough to tell me what is wrong with my methods." And here he handed some prints over for his customer's inspection. At once the latter became interested and gladly offered much practical advice.

Little more was said about business that day, but on his next trip the salesman noted a more cordial tone of welcome in the buyer's voice than before. Still he received no order. Before leaving he drew a package of photographic prints out of his pocket and handing them over the counter said, "You see, Mr. Sherman, I have followed your instructions and this is the result. There certainly is some improvement. But from what you said to me I rather fancy these two pictures were underexposed. Isn't that the case?"

The buyer proffered a few more suggestions and they parted good friends. On the next trip the salesman received a small order and thereafter he never failed to secure his share of that buyer's business.

The Salesman as a Source of Information.—The salesman who travels over wide stretches of country and visits several big cities has an opportunity of comparing notes with his brother salesmen in the same and in other lines. In this way valuable information as to trade tendencies can often be picked up. When the buyer is trying to gauge fashion and style or to ascertain the trend of prices in a fluctuating market, he often values the salesman's advice. When an extensive line of samples, more or less bewildering, is brought to the buyer's attention, his good-will can often be gained by suggesting to him styles which are selling best. Information of this kind can be used frequently as a means of cementing existing friendly relations or establishing new ones. An enterprising house always keeps its salesmen posted with information as to trade tendencies.

Friendly Relations in the Retail Field.—To cultivate friendly relations with customers is quite as profitable a stimulant to retail as to wholesale trade.

A customer entered a hardware store and ordered a can of varnish. "What is it to be used for?" asked the salesman. "We have varnishes for various purposes."

"I want to give my canoe a coating," was the reply.

"Well, then, you want a varnish that will stand water. Have you entered for the regatta next week?"

"Yes," responded the customer with evident interest. "I am in the canoe race."

A conversation followed about the regatta which soon developed into a bond of common interest between the two. The storekeeper added one more permanent customer to a list of patrons who traded with him because they liked his genial manner and the interest he took in their hobbies.

Sometimes service can be rendered without a word being spoken. Two young people, accompanied by an elderly lady, approached the soda fountain of a drug store on a warm, sunny afternoon. The young people ordered ice cream, but their companion did not wish for anything. The clerk in charge of the soda fountain served three glasses of ice water instead of two. As it was a hot day, he set the fan over their table in motion. Service-plus such as this is always appreciated and, whether rendered in the wholesale or retail field, develops that friendly feeling which leads to permanent business relations.

The General Principle.—The cultivation of friendly relations is only a means to an end when more direct methods of making a sale have proved unavailing. This point has been emphasized in the chapter on the "Preapproach." However, it is not always possible to learn in advance or at the first interview what may be the special interest or hobby of the prospect. In the sale of specialties of moderate value, when a

customer is called upon only once or at very rare intervals, this method is impracticable. In wholesale salesmanship, however, and when selling a specialty of sufficient importance to warrant several attempts to make a sale, every effort should be made to learn from observation, from outside information, and from queries to those who are acquainted with the buyer, what his hobby or interest may be. In the hands of a capable salesman this knowledge once gained becomes a valuable wedge of entry against the closed door.

CHAPTER XIX

THE RETAIL SATISFACTION THAT CREATES GOOD-WILL

The Importance of Retail Good-Will.—We have seen how important it is for the salesman and the house he represents to establish friendly relations with the wholesale buyer. It is equally important for the retail salesperson to do everything possible to secure the good-will of the shopper. Customers must be attracted and then pleased before anything can be sold. The ideal for every store is that every purchase should give complete satisfaction. The nearer the approach to this ideal, the stronger become the strands of good-will that bind customers to the store.

A large department store may spend $200,000 or more a year in advertising. The firm knows that some of this publicity may cost several times the profit made on the sales that can be directly traced thereto. The main object of publicity is to satisfy and please the customers who are attracted by it, so that they visit the store again and again. In thus securing the customers' good-will the manner and the adequacy of the salesperson who waits on them are important factors.

The Study of the Art of Giving Satisfaction.—To satisfy customers, therefore, should be the chief aim of every salesperson. The study of the art of pleasing the shopper is a postgraduate course in salesmanship that every retail salesperson needs. Yet the majority of those who serve behind retail counters give little if any thought to the matter. Customers come to the store with more or less decided ideas as to

what they want, and so the assumption is that the sale will depend upon the mental attitude of the shopper. When the sale is made, the important question as to whether the goods will give the satisfaction that can reasonably be expected or that the salesperson has led the customer to expect, is rarely considered; and if the customer leaves without making a purchase, little thought is given to the reason why.

The majority of retail salespersons, in fact, do not realize the necessity of bringing thought to bear upon their daily duties—their manner, bearing, truthfulness of statement, and personal efficiency; and only a minority leaven their work as a whole with a sincere desire to please.

Things the Salesperson Must Refrain from Doing.—The attitude of the representative on the road is positive and aggressive. He has to approach and sometimes force his offer upon the attention of buyers. The attitude of the retail salesperson, if not inactive, is distinctly more passive than that of the outside representative. The customer comes to the store; he or she expresses a wish; and the salesperson seeks to fulfil it as satisfactorily as possible.

In the cultivation of friendly relations with the buyer there are many definite and positive things which a salesman on the road can remember to practice when opportunity offers—all with the object of creating a favorable impression. In cultivating the good-will of retail customers it is more difficult to impress them with the personality of the salesperson. The first requirement on the part of salespersons is that they shall refrain from doing anything which directly or indirectly disturbs the harmonious relations of a customer with the store.

For example, every care should be taken to avoid giving offense to even the most crotchety and unreasonable customer; all customers should be treated alike, regardless of their social importance as revealed by appearance or manner; no customer

should be urged to buy when merely looking around; no claims should be made for the goods which cannot be upheld by use or wear; and nothing should be done in word or deed which might suggest indifference and lack of that attention to which all shoppers are entitled by virtue of the patronage they bestow upon the store.

Positive Things the Salesperson Can Do.—The attitude of the salesperson need, however, by no means be entirely passive. The salesman on the road can make a favorable impression upon his customers by the geniality and sincerity of his manner. The salesperson in a store can practice the art of making the customers feel that they are welcome guests and that the person who attends to them is anxious to please.

It must not be forgotten that many people are temperamentally shy and diffident and dislike to give trouble. A valuable quality for the salesperson is the ability to put such customers at their ease, so that they will take the time and trouble needed to find just what they want and just what suits them. Other persons, again, are exacting to the verge of unreasonableness. This class may make large drafts on the salesperson's patience, but if this patience results in praise of the store it is worth the effort involved.

The Salesperson and the Service of the Store.—The modern word which sums up the art of pleasing customers is that of "service." Service may be said to begin with the buying. This presupposes that every care is taken in the selection of goods that are perforce sold at a price to cover not only a direct profit, but also the prestige of the store and the service it renders. Service involves also the delivery of the goods to the customer in perfect condition, and may even go so far as an offer to exchange or refund the price of any article if it fails to give satisfaction. Between the beginning and

the end of service there are many little details for the performance of which the salesperson is responsible. Unless these are attended to carefully and satisfactorily the perfection of the service as a whole suffers.

The Goods Must Give Satisfaction.—Service may thus be divided into two parts: that for which the management is responsible, and that for which the sales force is responsible.

The management is primarily responsible for the satisfaction that the goods afford. Yet the most careful buying and the utmost honesty of statement will fail in the effort to give satisfaction unless the salesperson describes the goods accurately and with equal honesty. To the best of his ability, the buyer takes every precaution not to offer anything for sale that cannot be expected to give reasonable service. But, in an effort to meet competition, articles are frequently manufactured that while of fair value for the price asked, are ill adapted for the service they are expected to render.

Especially is this the case with things which have to withstand wear and tear. The appearance and finish of such an article may fail to reveal that its quality is of a low grade. When handling wares of this kind the temptation is great, in order to make a sale, especially when the customer is doubtful of the quality, to exaggerate, if not to make statements which are not true. When the goods prove disappointing, as they frequently do, the customer becomes distrustful of the store, its methods on the whole are regarded with a tinge of suspicion, and its good-will in consequence is injured.

A salesperson should tell the truth about the goods, even if thereby a sale is lost. The actual truth will come out sooner or later.

When a customer finds that a misstatement was made at the time of purchasing a certain article, the invariable result is a loss of confidence in the methods of the store when the

defects of the purchase are discovered. Although a customer may refuse an article when a true description of its quality is given, at the same time confidence in the honesty of the store is increased thereby. One sale lost through honesty of statement in the present may be offset by a dozen or more made in the future because of the confidence engendered by the truth.

The Result of Truthfulness of Statement.—A lady entered a furniture store to ascertain the price of a mahogany sideboard she had seen in the window.

"What is the price?" she asked.

"Ninety dollars, Madam," replied the salesman.

"Is it solid mahogany?"

"No, Madam," promptly replied the salesman. "It would be impossible to purchase a solid mahogany sideboard at that figure. You will, however, find that the veneer is perfectly applied and cannot be detected unless examined by an expert. If handled with reasonable care this sideboard will outlast your lifetime and that of the next generation."

The lady left the store without making a purchase. Three days later she returned with a young man whom she was about to marry, and the couple selected several hundred dollars' worth of furniture. While making her purchases she told the salesman that she had tried to buy a mahogany sideboard from another dealer who had offered her one for $95, declaring it to be solid mahogany throughout. But remembering the salesman's remark that it would be impossible to make a sideboard of solid mahogany at a figure near this price, she became suspicious and decided to make all her purchases at the store where she felt reliance upon the salesman's statements.

Complaints about Unsatisfactory Goods.—When an article which is guaranteed to be of good quality and of a certain kind fails to give satisfaction in rendering the service that can

reasonably be expected, any complaint should be investigated and, if justifiable, promptly corrected. The policy may at times seem expensive, but experience proves that it pays because of the good-will thereby produced.

A country customer bought a handsome seasoned oak rocker by mail from a large store. In ordering, the stipulation was made for solid oak, as a strong chair was required.

Three years later a man appeared in the furniture department of this store bringing with him a parcel. He insisted upon seeing the buyer. Before saying anything he undid the parcel and revealed the end of a broken rocker.

"I bought a chair from you over three years ago," he began, "and I paid $20 on purpose to be sure of buying one made from seasoned oak. When I buy furniture I want it to last. Now look what has happened to it! In twisting this chair around, its rocker caught a table leg and snapped off like a cornstalk."

"Why, a rocker of seasoned oak should stand any sort of an ordinary blow during your lifetime," replied the buyer as he picked it up to examine it. "This break has evidently been due to a flaw covered by the stain. We are sorry to have caused you this inconvenience and trouble, and if you will send the chair to us at our expense we will have it repaired and return it to you without any charge."

The result of this liberal policy, despite the three years' service the chair had given, was that the confidence of the customer, who at first doubted the truth of the description of the rocker, was at once restored. Though this incident illustrates more an aspect of store policy than of salesmanship, it emphasizes the importance of supporting one's words with deeds, and this the salesperson should always strive to do. Truthfulness of statements and a willingness to live up to them are requisites for building up that confidence without which no permanent good-will can be established.

Superficial Study Kills Enthusiasm.—In addition to being truthful in describing the goods, the salesperson must put life into the description. Many clerks lack enthusiasm in their manner of describing or presenting their goods because they study them superficially and consequently have only a slight interest in them. They learn just enough to give a stereotyped sales talk. They do not study the goods intensively to discover in how many ways appeal can be made.

The saleswoman who is showing a pair of gloves to a retail customer and remarks, "Just *feel* this glove! Isn't the kid beautifully soft, and isn't it a *stylish* glove too? I think it is one of the *smartest* styles we have ever sold," indicates by the enthusiasm of her manner her admiration for the merchandise she is handling. She cannot fail to arouse the same feeling in some degree in the mind of the customer.

Salespersons who lack this appreciation of the fine points of the goods because they have given them only superficial study present the sales argument in a flat and unconvincing manner. They wait upon a certain number of customers a day; they explain in a methodical, but half-hearted, fashion the merits of certain goods when questioned by the customer who happens to need them; they accept an order often without so much as a "thank you," and after the goods are wrapped they listlessly watch the customer leave the store.

Compare with the languid, apathetic type the appearance and expression of the salesperson who is enthusiastic; the expression is wide-awake and alert; the manner pleasing and courteous; and the whole attention is concentrated upon giving satisfaction. A store can reflect its willingness to serve and its desire to please only through its sales force. Salespeople who put the animation of sincere yet quiet enthusiasm into their work benefit the house, the customer, and themselves.

The Clerical Work.—A detail of the store's service for which the salesperson is responsible and to which careful atten-

tion should be paid is the clerical work attached to the sale and delivery of goods. In making the sales slips every care should be taken to obtain the customer's correct name, with the correct street address. Everything should be written so clearly that there is no possibility of making a mistake later. Delays frequently occur because of such mistakes and these acts of carelessness create an unfavorable impression.

Having made out the sales slip accurately in every detail, the salesman should then see to the assembling and packing of the goods so far as the responsibility for these details falls upon him. To insure accuracy it is necessary to acquire the habit of concentrating while performing purely routine tasks. Mistakes, for instance, frequently occur in wrapping up parcels, and orders are sent out mixed or incomplete because the mind is permitted to wander to other subjects while the hands are engaged in sorting and packing the goods.

Acquiring the Habit of Concentration.—One person handles a multiplicity of details year in and year out and a mistake rarely if ever occurs; another, with much less detail to attend to, frequently makes errors of omission and commission for which there is no excuse. The one *thinks* about the task in hand to the exclusion of other thoughts and the work in consequence becomes much more interesting—and accurate. The mind of the other is allowed to wander with the result that only a perfunctory interest is taken in an irksome task and mistakes are the natural result.

Since much of the work of retail salespeople involves close attention to details, it is important that the habit of concentration be acquired. The faculty can be developed more readily than is usually imagined if one will remember to make a point of doing a particular task *just as well as it can be done.* Drudgery loses its monotony and boredom vanishes when genuine effort and attention are given to details. In arranging stock let the arrangement be as perfect as possible and free from the

slightest trace of untidiness; in writing out a sales slip make the figures so clear that a mistake is impossible and verify the address and the calculations so that accuracy is assured; when wrapping up a parcel make it as symmetrical and neat as it can be made.

When we try to do anything as well as it can be done we take much more interest in the task and this is the secret of concentration.

All Customers Must be Treated Alike.—An invariable rule of every well-managed store is that the same interest and courtesy should be paid to the customer who is shabbily dressed as to the one who is well dressed. To jump to conclusions merely from general appearance and the style and value of the garments worn is sometimes dangerous as the following incident shows:

On a rainy morning a lady dressed in a raincoat that seemed a little the worse for wear, a hat very much under the influence of the weather, and equipped with an umbrella of nondescript character, entered a fashionable store in order to buy some lace for her daughter's wedding dress. When she reached the lace department she requested the salesperson to show her the Brussels lace she wanted. The salesgirl placed an imitation lace on the counter.

"This is not the real thing," said the customer. "This is not what I want. I asked for Brussels lace."

"Why," replied the salesgirl with a look of surprise, "that kind of lace is very expensive."

The customer without another word picked up her umbrella and made her way to the exit of the store. The manager happened to meet her as she was leaving and recognized her as a personage of considerable social importance. He judged by her manner that something was the matter. So he asked her if she had been properly treated.

"I have just made up my mind never to enter your store again," was the curt reply.

The case was explained, the manager was profuse in his apologies, and begged the customer to return. She was placed in charge of another saleswoman and before she left the store her purchases amounted to over $1,000.

This illustration is typical of the treatment frequently offered to customers who fail to impress the ignorant or ill-mannered salesperson because of some apparent neglect in their appearance and their apparel. Of course, not every shabbily dressed person is a wealthy shopper in disguise. But the risk of offending a well-to-do patron whose appearance in no way indicates prosperity is much too great to permit anything but a uniform and courteous method of handling all customers alike. Furthermore, the customer who is forced to be economical this year may be well-to-do next year. Of course, as a matter of fact, the truly helpful salesman is attentive and courteous to everyone because it is a basic trait in him.

Helping the Customer.—A man entered a hardware store and asked for a certain kind of hook to use in support of a curtain rod. The salesman who waited on him curtly replied, "We haven't any of those—don't keep them in stock," and turned away to attend to another customer.

The man entered a second store and here the salesman's reply was, "I'm sorry, we don't keep these hooks in stock because they are a special kind of hook. You can buy them only in a store that sells curtains or curtain rods. A big department store will be the best place for you to go."

The customer followed the advice and had no trouble in procuring what he wanted. His future hardware needs were naturally supplied by the store in which the salesman had done his best to help him.

This incident illustrates the importance of doing every-

thing possible to help a customer, even if there seems to be no possibility of deriving present or future benefit from the courtesy. When goods are being displayed, if the customer asks for advice or seems to rely upon the salesman's taste or opinion, the obvious policy is for the latter to do everything to help the customer come to a decision. When, however, a customer makes a request either for information or for something to be done which in no way relates to a possible sale, many salespersons mistakenly assume that it is outside their province to help or to humor that customer.

Patience.—Customers who are difficult to please or who cannot find just the thing they have in mind, often sorely try the salesperson. If there is one virtue more important than another for salespeople to possess in such a case, it is that of patience. Without patience they cannot give consideration and careful attention to the customer's needs, desires, or whims.

A lady bought an evening gown and an afternoon dress. She had great difficulty in making up her mind and occupied over an hour of a salesgirl's time. Two days later she returned the evening gown because she did not like its appearance in artificial light. A day later she again visited the store and asked for the saleswoman from whom she bought the two gowns. As the salesperson came forward the customer greeted her in this way:

"You were unusually kind and patient with me in helping me to select that evening gown the other day, which I found did not suit me when I tried it on at home. I now want to see whether I can find something that I like better than the afternoon dress."

With such an erratic customer as this it would have been natural to reveal some impatience, but the salesgirl, with courteous patience, replied:

"I shall be very glad to show you what we have, Madam."

Thereupon a lengthy and patient search began which lasted over an hour. Before the customer left she not only decided to keep the afternoon dress but she selected another and much more expensive evening gown in place of the one returned.

"She was so helpful," the customer exclaimed to a friend as they left the store together. "I really did not know what kind of evening gown I wanted. But she went to so much trouble. She found something that just suited me in the end and I simply had to buy it. I shall ask for her again when I want another gown."

However inexperienced and ignorant a salesperson may be, much will be forgiven for the sake of patience and a sincere desire to help others. Helpfulness, moreover, soon becomes second nature if we look for opportunities to practice it.

The store that enjoys the reputation of employing salespeople who are uniformly courteous and desirous of helping customers, finds in this one of its biggest business assets. The salesperson who sincerely tries to please and who remembers that the likes, dislikes, and feelings of the customer must come first in consideration is the type of employee who builds up that intangible but most concrete of business assets—good-will founded on satisfaction.

CHAPTER XX

THE SALESMAN AND THE SALES MANAGER

Dependence of the Salesman upon the Management.—All the skill of the salesman is abortive unless he has the support of a business which manufactures or distributes a commodity of unquestionable merit, and which has an efficient working organization carrying out a constructive sales policy. The more clearly the salesman understands the organization and policies of his company, the more fully he understands what assistance he may expect from them and what responsibilities and support he himself owes to them, the more successful will his own work be.

The ultimate purpose of every business organization is to sell its commodities or its service, *at a profit*. While its primary purpose may be the production of goods, nevertheless it must sell those goods at a profit if it is to maintain itself successfully. It is obvious, therefore, that the efficiency of the sales department is of first importance to every other department. On the other hand, the sales policy must co-ordinate with the production or distribution conditions and with the financial limitations of the company. It is the duty of the general management to see that all departments of the business so work together as to make a harmonious and vigorous unit that will successfully accomplish the purpose of the organization.

The Sales Manager and His Functions.—Between the management and the sales force is the sales manager, who acts

as a power transmission line between the salesman and the organization as a whole. His work is, on the one hand, to co-operate with the executives in charge of the departments of finance and production, and on the other hand, to assist the salesmen to carry out the policies of the house.

Among the special functions of the sales manager are the employment of salesmen, the determination of fair and uniform remuneration, and the assignment of territory. He must maintain discipline among the sales force and see that they do not depart from the rules and policies of the company. He must also secure from such reports as are needed for formulating and directing the sales campaigns.

There are few periods, if any, during the year when production and sales are equal. Sometimes there is a surplus of stock due to overproduction; at other times merchandise is allowed to accumulate in anticipation of a seasonal demand which would exceed normal production. Certain goods may require intensive selling pressure to get the volume necessary to assure a profit. On the other hand, the sales department may have to remove sales effort from certain goods to enable the factory to catch up with orders.

The purpose of the sales manager is to plan the sales activity so as to make sure that all the commodities offered for sale will spread evenly over the whole of the territory covered and that the factory will be operating on full time with no expensive overtime nor slack periods. The best method of making sure that the orders taken by the sales department will keep even pace with the goods produced by the manufacturing department is the sales quota, as set for each salesman for a given period of time in a given territory for each product of the company.

The Salesman's Attitude Toward the Management.—The salesman's efforts must be articulated with the general policies

of the sales department. If he considered merely his own desire to please his customers, he might easily embarrass his manager by making concessions in price, terms, conditions of making, delivery, and such like, that disturb the working of the organization. He must realize that there must be a head and that his own ideas must be subordinated to the general policies and plans of the management.

The sales manager is usually glad to explain the reason for any rule he establishes to any salesman who may feel that it works a hardship on him. The salesman who hesitates to ask his manager freely and frankly for explanation or help is depriving himself of one of his privileges. The salesman must not be temperamental, however, or expect to be praised for merely doing his duty, nor must he show rancor at necessary criticism. In a word, he should be a support to the department and not expect to use it as a crutch.

The Influence of Sales on Labor Control.—When the salesman, working in harmony with the sales manager's instructions, secures his quota, his work has a direct beneficial effect upon the labor conditions in the factory. An attained sales quota means a busy production department. It requires no deep thought to appreciate the effect of full and continuous employment on labor. When a workman is sure of a regular pay envelope he is happier and more contented on his job, and therefore does better work. Full-time employment means to the worker that his family is assured the normal necessities and comfort of life.

Furthermore, it is well recognized that the product of intermittent work is not equal in quality to regular week-in and week-out production. When the salesman sells his quota he is also helping to maintain and improve the quality of the goods his customers receive. As quality improves, the opportunity for repeat orders becomes easier.

Salesmen working on a commission basis often feel that they may please themselves whether they work 5 hours or 50 hours a week. Obviously, he should work as long and as faithfully on a commission as on a salary basis. A commission salesman who fails to give his best efforts to his work may very easily cause his sales manager to fail in selling the factory quota.

The salesman should consider his quota both from the cash total of sales and from the number of families his sales efforts keep well cared for. If it requires twenty workmen to make the goods that the salesman sells, the salesman's efforts are actually finding the means of work for twenty men, and contentment and happiness for their families. Such a view of his sales quota will elevate the quality of the salesman's work and intensify his satisfaction.

Special Orders a Hindrance.—In working for his quota, however, the salesman should as far as possible avoid special or "rush" orders. Standarization is one of the scientific means of reducing production costs and improving the quality of production. When the salesman requires changed specifications, showing no recognition of the fact that such orders (unless in large quantity) yield no profit to the house, he is not studying the best interests of his house, nor those of his customer.

Special or rush orders derange production schedules and delay deliveries of regular orders. Because of haste in executing such orders, moreover, the special or rush goods themselves suffer somewhat in finish or appearance.

When asked how soon he can deliver, the salesman should ask, "When do you wish them?" instead of replying, "We can ship at once." If the customer can wait a week or two that fact should be noted on the order. It is then possible to make deliveries within the specified time, yet at a date that throws but little burden on production.

The Assistance Provided the Salesman.—Salesmen should take advantage of the assistance that the sales manager and the other executives of the company can give them. It is of importance for a young man to consider carefully, before joining an organization, just what the company has done or will do to make selling possible, since the salesman's success will depend to a great extent upon the assistance given him.

The sales manager considers it one of the most important parts of his work to help the salesman personally in opening new territory and in calling on difficult customers. He does not take a very active part in the selling but merely adds the dignity and emphasis of his rank when it becomes necessary. Dealers naturally feel that they cannot give a sales manager the lame excuses that they offer to the rank and file of salesmen. They may care but little what the salesman thinks of them, but they like to stand well in the opinion of the man higher up.

The Sales Manual.—The sales manual is a form of assistance given the salesman, the importance of which is too often underestimated. That hundreds of salesmen have succeeded without manuals proves nothing. There is no way of judging how much better these men might have been had they had the advantage of sales manuals, nor how many others have been failures or near failures because they have never had this type of help. The alert salesman welcomes every form of instruction that may contribute to his efficiency. The chief value of the manual consists in placing in the hands of the salesman instructive material of the following nature:

1. The history of the company.
2. The organization of the company (with chart).
3. Merchandise information and possibly processes of manufacture.
4. Uses of the product and information concerning the market.

5. Common objections and their answers.
6. The use of selling equipment.
7. The use of report forms.
8. The policies of the company.
9. Explanation of advertising and dealers' helps.
10. Testimonials.
11. The principles of salesmanship.

If a company does not supply this information in printed form, it may have it available for the salesman with gumption enough to ask for it. A salesman should be reluctant to work for a company that declines to furnish such information.

Advertising.—The indifferent attitude of many salesmen toward the advertising methods and material of their organizations constitute a serious weakness in the machine of distribution. Many salesmen, while admitting the theoretical value of advertising, fail to make the most of the advertising which their firm puts out or to co-operate adequately with the advertising department. Business houses that have spent thousands of dollars in advertising have failed to profit by it because of the lack of co-operation of the salesmen. Confidence and good-will which the advertising has created, inquiries which the salesman should have turned into orders, may be killed in a moment by his indifference or lack of comprehension.

The salesman is under obligation to understand and carry out the advertising policies of his house. He will be well paid for his co-operation. The salesman often imagines that his success is wholly personal and that the sums spent on advertising had better be added to his commissions. And if the advertising in some instances secures direct orders, he is prone to fear that it will eventually lead to his own elimination. The truth is, the best selling records are made in connection with advertising, and the way of the salesman of the well-advertised product is made easy even though he is unaware of the fact.

The chief function of the salesman is essentially closing sales, getting orders, because no matter how attractive his talk and personality, unless he takes orders he is no salesman. Hence a salesman should be mainly busied with inducing action, working with prospects whose attention is already won and whose interest is already created. Under such circumstances he will sell far more rapidly and, as a consequence, get a much larger proportion of daily, weekly, or monthly business for himself and for his house. If that confidence which alone leads to good buying is established even in part by skilful advertising, the customer is well along on the mental journey to action when the salesman first meets him. It must be recognized that the first two stages of the sales process, attention and interest, are developed with comparative ease and to a high degree by the use of advertising.

Catalogs.—Similarly, the salesman's work is very greatly assisted if his firm provides him with a well-made catalog. Even though a product is well advertised to the consumer and there is a steady demand for it, its distribution is not going to be thorough unless ample machinery is provided for getting the orders. The salesman cannot assume the entire burden of distribution. A catalog is one of the best and also one of the commonest methods of reinforcing his efforts. Once a prospect has become an established customer of a firm, the catalog will prove "a friend in need" to be consulted and used in emergency. The customer's use of the catalog in no way leads to disuse of other selling methods; for what maintains his confidence in the firm is of course his repeated personal contact with the firm's representative, i.e., the salesman.

Sales Campaign Planning.—Under an able manager the salesman is encouraged to improve his selling, by the introduction of more system, more thoroughness, and more energy

into his work. His route through his territory, his lists of prospects, his modes of approach, are all checked up and revised from time to time. Instead of half working some towns and never visiting others, the salesman is helped to plan his trip so that he "makes" certain towns every day and must call on all likely prospects. To carry out this schedule he must put in a good day's work. If he does and has any sales ability at all, the results of his efforts are bound to be satisfactory. Even an automaton calling on prospects all day long and putting up a definite proposition to them will get some business.

Planning the Salesman's Calls.—The average number of calls a salesman makes is just as important as the number of prospects he actually sells. When a man begins to sell every prospect he calls upon, or anywhere near that proportion, that fact is a danger signal. Even though experience shows that when a territory is properly covered not more than three calls out of ten produce immediate orders, the whole ten calls should be made. The product does not get adequate representation unless they are made. The daily reports of calls and sales will show in the long run whether a salesman is really representing the company in his territory or merely skimming the cream.

With very few exceptions those firms which keep accurate records report that the ratio between the number of calls and the number of sales per day remains fairly constant, and this ratio is used as a check on the daily reports.

Tomorrow's business may depend to a considerable extent upon the apparently unprofitable calls made today, and the salesman who judges his work wholly upon the number of orders he takes may be omitting several interviews and the business that may eventuate from them.

Generally speaking, the number of calls that the salesman can make per day will vary according to five different conditions:

1. The nature of the commodity; the degree of ease with which it can be demonstrated and explained.
2. The density of the market, i.e., the ease with which the salesman can get from one prospect to the next.
3. The factors involved in making sales, i.e., the actual time and energy consumed in the details of selling.
4. The advertising that has preceded the salesman and the customer's consequent previous knowledge of the line of goods or of the firm.
5. The average size of the order placed.

The sales manager judges the salesman, not merely upon the amount of gross business brought in, but by the thoroughness with which his firm is represented in his territory. A salesman may call on his customers once every two months, or six months, or perhaps only once a year. Many things can happen between these trips. The customer may lose his enthusiasm for the salesman's product. He can even forget about it entirely. Competition can become strongly entrenched. With competition as active as it is today, the sales manager knows that a territory requires constant watching, and therefore he requires his salesman to make calls, even though the salesman himself may deem them lost motion.

Use of the Company's Territory.—There are hundreds of salesmen, honest and hard workers, who keep territory covered but hold business down because they do not know how to build it up. They plod along, selling each customer a little on every trip; the dealers buy small complementary orders because the salesman is so pleasant and persistent. The trouble with such salesmen is the lack of a definite purpose. Hard work alone is not enough. It is necessary to know *how* to work hard. To do this he should know the sales possibilities of the territory, and of the prospects in the territory. He should make or exceed the daily quota of sales as worked out for him by the

sales department. He should plan daily to get new customers, at the same time properly caring for the old customers. He should strive to increase the amount of time spent each day in interviewing by scheduling his work. To summarize, he should set himself a definite daily task. The habit of indefiniteness, or lack of planning, costs many salesmen their chances for promotion or even their positions. A competent and sympathetic sales manager can do a great deal to aid the salesman to reach his best productivity.

Helping a Man to Help Himself.—A sales manager was put in charge of the sales department of an organization whose business had been allowed to fall off. Almost at once one of the salesmen complained that there was not enough business in his present territory to support a salesman and that he wanted another section. The manager said, "If you want it, you can have some other territory. But we must keep a man in your old territory. Before you are transferred, work out for me a digest or report of all information that the new man will need. Get a map of the territory, and mark it out with colored tacks to show every possible customer, indicating every one of them that has only our product, every one that carries some of our equipment, and all those that have none at all. And list the figures and special data for each of these together with the routing, train schedule, hotel and showroom accommodations, and so forth. It ought to take you about two weeks to work that out, you know most of the facts, but you will have to canvass some of the plants to get information. Come back when you have the job finished."

The salesman pottered around for several days with his map and tacks. Then he got to the stage where he had to go out after more information. Before his two weeks were up he wrote: "If you try to transfer me out of this territory, I'll quit."

The manager knew well enough that a systematic survey of the territory would quickly convince the salesman of the true nature of his difficulty. He also knew that the details of a local campaign are best settled by the man who works that district.

Danger Points—Special Discounts and Concessions.—There are certain points as to which the salesman should be specially careful to keep his conduct in line with company policy. One of these concerns special discounts and concessions. Some salesmen still retain the habit of granting to customers special discounts out of their own commissions, a practice that has survived from the old school of salesmanship which advocated getting business "any old way as long as you get it."

This practice is fundamentally dishonest, and deprives the house either of trade or money to which it is entitled, for when one customer finds out that another has an inside discount he is rightly indignant and transfers his patronage to another firm, or else insists on that special rate for himself. The special or personal discount is a bribe, buying an order. It gets nearer and dearer to buy business, and the salesman soon finds he has too little left of his income to live on, and resigns. Then follows the long, uphill pull of rebuilding the territory, a heart-rending task for the new man who receives this territory, since the goods are not properly sold to those customers because they have been bought on the basis of the special discount and not on the merits of the goods. Special or private concessions of any sort are to be shunned; they are a contradiction of justice and fair play.

The Danger of Overloading the Dealer.—Another point for the salesman to watch concerns the amount that may profitably be sold to each customer. Not many years ago, the

policy of keeping the dealer busy disposing of overstock was regarded as a satisfactory method of preventing him from getting into the hands of a competitor. But such a practice is not common today. Salesmen now realize that it is suicidal to permit a dealer to buy more than he can sell profitably. An oversupply of a product slows up turnover, leads to senseless price-cutting, and eventually causes a dealer to become so dissatisfied with a really valid commodity that he abandons it entirely. Hence, many progressive salesmen will cut down an order if they think it is too large.

On the other hand, it is the duty of the salesman to see that his customers buy adequate quantities. The dealer who buys in trivial or piecemeal lots from every salesman who comes along does not keep up his stock. He is always running out of lines, and makes no attempt to fill them until the salesman selling that particular merchandise comes around again. Such a dealer is a poor representative for a distributor. Manifestly a dealer who is as likely as not to be out of a line of goods will create dissatisfaction among his customers and their trade will go to a competitor who may carry another line competing not only with this shiftless retailer, but with the wholesale salesman's firm as well. Consequently the wholesale salesman must educate the improvident retailer in maintaining adequate stocks of goods and in keeping up a quick turnover without sacrifice in "bargain" selling.

The Profitableness of Co-operation.—Matters such as these discussed in this chapter the sales manager is constantly considering. He analyzes carefully the requirements of the trade and the general policies of the management. From the result of his analyses he builds up sales policies and methods covering all phases of distribution. The more close and friendly the co-operation between salesman and manager the greater the salesman's permanent success and profit. The policies and

methods of the organization make the guide-posts which when followed will lead him to more and more orders and more and more customers and business friends.

Credits and Collections.—The salesman inevitably must co-operate with the credit department of his company. He must himself supplement for his credit department the information furnished from the credit agencies, if he desires to obtain the maximum amount of business with a minimum risk, for even the best credit agencies cannot keep their information entirely up to the minute. Besides, capital is not the only index of safety. Character and ability are of even more importance. The salesman in the field, if he keeps his eyes and ears open, is able to get first-hand knowledge of conditions which the credit man should know in order to decide correctly whether to extend or limit the credit of a customer.

In addition to being a sort of assistant credit man, turning back to the home office constant credit information about his customers, the salesman also aids as a collector. His interest in this matter is shown by the fact that very often he voluntarily undertakes to make collections among those who are a little slow in paying. For this and for other obvious reasons carbon copies of all important correspondence between the home office and the customer are often sent to the most tried and reliable salesmen. It is not ordinarily desirable for a salesman to do any routine collection work but it is good practice for him to deal with special cases. In the case of a disputed account the customer may feel that an allowance is due on account of breakage, delay, or deterioration. As in the case of all complaints, the salesman should aid in making a satisfactory adjustment.

Many salesmen look upon the work of the collection department as a deterrent factor that necessarily hinders the increase of sales. Every salesman, however, must accept the

fact that collections are to be expected; that they do not commence at the maturity of an invoice, but rather, their existence is coincident with the actual placing of an order.

Many salesmen lose effectiveness because they side with the slow payers and find excuses for those customers who neglect to pay their bills. They fail to realize that they lose possible sales on each of these accounts, since if the bills are paid monthly when due, there is a possibility of twelve sales a year, but if the account is overdue the purchaser knows he cannot readily buy until he has paid what he owes. The salesman should accept the sound theory that a sale is damaged every time the buyer fails to pay in accordance with the terms of the sale. He should work out practical methods of passing along this view of collections to his customers other than the common practice of intimating to the customer that he is injuring his credit standing.

It does not help matters, of course, to nag or to preach. It is better to assume that the bill is a natural event in the average man's life, that he expects to pay it, and that he prefers to have the salesman remind him in time to take advantage of the terms or to prevent his getting behind. If a customer's credit is endangered, the salesman should encourage a full statement of the exact nature of the case and help the customer to devise and carry out a thoroughly reasonable plan of settlement.

If the customer feels that the company should extend his credit, the salesman might answer thus, "Mr. Clark, we are dealing with more than 12,000 accounts. I expect at least 25 per cent of them could find several reasons right now for wanting their credit extended. But if we did it, you can see that we might easily be in serious financial straits."

Making the sale is really only half of the transaction. The other half is collecting the money. In reality, the salesman's value to the house is determined not by the goods he sells, but

by the profits made on the sale of those goods. Credit losses affect him as much as they do the firm. Hence the futility of the ancient feud in many houses between salesmen and the credit department, and hence the need of co-operation between the two. The best salesmen are the best aids to the collectors because they know it is much easier to sell a man goods when he does not owe the house than when he is about two drafts ahead of his deposits. High costs of doing business and close prices due to keen competition do not permit long-time credits, as the salesman should realize when they begin to feel insulted because the credit manager refuses to extend lengthy credits to their customers. Credit is a great thing to do business on. Some credits are more elastic than others, but they all have a disastrous snap-back when they break. Actually, the judicious credit manager is a real friend to the sales department.

CHAPTER XXI

THE KNOWLEDGE THAT GIVES BREADTH

The Growing Importance of the Man Who Knows.—The importance of knowing one's goods is now so universally recognized that no firm of any standing would send a man out prepared in the old-fashioned way—furnished merely with a grip and primed with answers to a few likely questions. Today the engagement of an outside man is never for a moment considered by manufacturers or wholesale dealers, unless he is either experienced in a firm's particular line, or unless the organization is equipped to put him through a comprehensive training course. Moreover, all department stores of the first rank and many less important retail houses now maintain schools of salesmanship. These retail houses also encourage their employees to study their goods during leisure hours, providing them with literature which describes the origin of their wares and the process of manufacture involved.

No matter whether a salesman is selling on the road or behind the counter, he needs a fund of information about the goods he handles. In salesmanship ignorance is the greatest of all crimes of omission. The man who is in daily contact with certain kinds of goods and is continually handling them may at any time be asked a question about them which is quite remote from his selling task. The fact that he is in charge of their sale presupposes that he knows more about them than the average person. When he is forced to show his ignorance by such an answer as, "I don't know," he fails to impress others as a person of intelligence and suffers in their estimation.

His firm, as well as he himself, loses their confidence in some degree.

Necessity of Knowledge.—Much of the knowledge that is an essential part of every salesman's work is of such an obvious nature as to merit no more than passing comment. Knowledge of his goods and of the trade he represents may be taken for granted. In addition, the house will furnish him with the instructions needed for making out an order and will post him regarding methods of shipment, terms of payment, house reports, and so on. This information varies, since every business has its own rules and observances. Every important firm makes a point of furnishing its representatives with fundamental information relating to the goods, the firm, and their territory. To fail to do this would be lacking in foresight.

But in addition to the knowledge that is peculiar to his particular business, there is a fund of more or less valuable information which every salesman needs to acquire, if he is to impress his customers as a person of more than average intelligence and education. The higher rungs of the ladder of salesmanship can be attained only by the men who have this intelligence. To succeed in any walk of life a man must first have ability and character; but though he possesses both in a high degree, he will be outstripped in the race for success by the man who, in addition to character and ability, also *knows*. The man who knows must have made a conscious effort to acquire his knowledge.

Knowledge of the Firm and Its History.—First on the list, if not first in importance, in every salesman's store of information is a knowledge of the history, the policy, and the personnel of the house he represents.

A wholesale salesman employed by a large corporation has been known to set out not knowing even the name of its presi-

dent. This was of course a careless lack of preparation. Every salesman should learn the history of his firm, the names of its personnel, what the different departments are, their relations to each other, the names of the heads of the different departments, and so on. He is constantly meeting people who are acquainted with or have had previous dealings with the house. When they mention the name of someone connected with it, or an important fact about its history with which the salesman is unfamiliar, he is placed in an embarrassing position.

Knowledge of Processes of Manufacture.—In the sale of certain products a knowledge of the processes of manufacture is essential. In such cases representatives are not permitted to approach customers until they have served an apprenticeship in the factory, frequently receiving a preliminary training in every department of the business before they are sent out to sell. Salesmen who rise high in their calling are invariably those who, in addition to a carefully cultivated aptitude for selling goods, have acquired technical knowledge which equips them to meet on an equal footing the technically educated buyer. A salesman who wishes to advance rapidly is well advised to combine with his knowledge of salesmanship the study of at least one technical subject in the larger field of their trade. This combination will insure a much more lucrative position if the knowledge relates to a prosperous and commanding trade.

The Expert Knowledge Demanded by a Motor Truck Concern.—A well-known motor truck house insists that its salesmen study the technicalities of haulage and construction—not because this knowledge is needed as part of a sales talk, but because it is useful in order to obtain maximum results in sales. Motor trucks are frequently sold to men in possession of a technical knowledge of their construction, who have given close study to the subject of efficient haulage. The salesman

must be ready to meet and to sell to these technically trained minds. Long hauls, short hauls, constant loads, varying loads, hilly country, city traffic, and a hundred and one other considerations, all enter into the choice of a commercial vehicle. The man who is about to invest in an expensive fleet of motor trucks has to be shown how he can get the most for his money, and this means that the salesman must be familiar with all the intricate workings of a delivery or a transportation system.

School of Salesmanship for Specialty Selling.—Certain specialty houses which rely largely on the efforts of salesmen and whose specialty is a more or less complicated product, maintain schools of salesmanship in which every budding representative is carefully trained in the art of demonstrating his specialty and in answering the objections of buyers. If, for example, a piece of mechanism or an office appliance needs to be explained, the salesman must study and handle it until he thoroughly grasps its working. He is drilled in the demonstration of the product until he is familiar with its every detail.

This preparatory work is often carried a degree further. A class of instruction is formed, and each salesman in turn has to make a demonstration sale while the instructor or one of the pupils acts as the customer. The value of this drill cannot be overestimated. The salesman works under the critical eye of onlookers, who are ready to point out his weaknesses and to correct undesirable mannerisms of diction or of bearing.

When the man selling a specialty has no opportunity of going through a comprehensive course of instruction, he should take special pains to deliver his sales talk and make an actual demonstration of his methods to his friends with a view to friendly criticism and the eradication of defects.

Special Knowledge of Goods.—Before considering the general fund of knowledge which every salesman should pos-

sess, let us consider what should be his special knowledge of his goods other than that which is furnished him by the house he represents. He must, of course, be familiar with prices and be able to quote them without referring to a price book, unless there are hundreds of different items on his list. This information wins the buyer's respect and is the first distinguishing mark of the expert. He should also be able to explain fully what his goods will do—whether performances relate to service, durability, or any other striking record. Instances of customers with well-known names who have bought the product and secured good results from it are also useful knowledge.

One typewriter salesman, for example, makes a point of memorizing the time of various speed contests in which his machine has won prizes at mercantile exhibitions. He uses this information, which at first view does not seem to be of much interest or value to a business man, in order to *prove* the truth of his statements about the reliability of his machine.

In the same way the automobile salesman is usually familiar with the cost of operation and superiority of certain points of construction in the car he handles, and he also has at his finger ends instances of long service secured by users of the car.

Facts such as these, although they may not be useful in every sale, will sooner or later prove their value in particular cases.

The Special Knowledge of the Expert.—Much more than a knowledge of grades and prices and a perfect acquaintance with the talking points of one's goods is desirable when selling certain materials for manufacturing purposes. A successful cotton salesman, for example, has built up for himself such a reputation as an expert that all the business he can take care of comes to him over the telephone. Customers know that his judgment as to the fitness of various kinds of cotton for certain work is to be relied upon. When he advises them to buy

because the price is likely to advance, they act upon his suggestion. He is constantly being referred to because of his knowledge of statistics in the cotton market. He knows what affects the quality of cotton and understands the advantages of one kind over another for every process of manufacture. If a customer tells him for what purpose the cotton is needed, his judgment as to the kind best suited for the purpose can be relied on. Years of patient study combined with observation carried on with analytical minuteness has made him an expert in the cotton trade.

A rubber salesman attributes his success to his all-round knowledge of the industry. He can unerringly appraise the value of any goods by the use of a pocket magnifying glass. He knows the market conditions of all ingredients used in the manufacture of the product he handles, so that he can estimate the effect on prices of a rise or fall in the price of sulphur or some other material used in rubber manufacture.

The really big, successful salesmen of raw supplies are actually market and produce experts. Manufacturers, and to a less extent retailers, buy their judgment and knowledge when they buy the goods they have to offer. A salesman whose knowledge of the industry with which he is connected is deficient in any way is sharply limited in his earning power and almost certainly fails to rise to an executive position of any importance.

Knowledge of Competing Goods.—The study of any industry must also include a knowledge of rival firms and their goods. A careful study of competing goods and methods enables the salesman to compare his own merchandise and methods with those of competitors. When a favorable comparison can be made diplomatically, he can bring out adequately the strong points of his own line. When he notes competing goods or methods that are superior to his own, part of his duty

is to call the attention of his firm to the matter with a view to the improvement of its methods. Many valuable suggestions of this kind are frequently received from salesmen, and obviously the man who is most likely to make them is the man who is always studying and learning.

The comprehensive knowledge referred to in preceding sections is less vital in the sale of certain specialties where the element of competition is not to be feared. For instance, the adding machine salesman does not need to be equipped with a knowledge of factory processes and sources of raw materials; but he must be thoroughly familiar with every possible use of his device; he must be able to show the prospect how to derive the most benefit from its employment; and he must be acquainted with the limitations and the merits of competing devices.

An adding machine salesman, when requesting an interview for the purpose of demonstrating his machine, was met with the statement that the firm approached was considering the purchase of a certain make of typewriter to which an adding mechanism is attached. Not being familiar with this office device, the salesman was completely nonplused and was unable to point out why his own machine should be bought in preference to the combination device.

Knowledge for the Retail Salesperson.—Among retail salespeople lack of knowledge of the goods is unfortunately the general rule. Of course it is hardly practicable for them to have the thorough acquaintance with the various articles they handle which is usually possessed by the wholesale salesman, since the latter has probably spent years in studying his line and learning everything of value about it. But the clerk who is interested and wishes to succeed in his work is anxious to acquire something more than a superficial knowledge of the merchandise he handles. As emphasized in the chapter on

"Retail Satisfaction" (XIX), he should be in a position to answer every probable question and should always be able to volunteer information as to why one kind of article is preferable to another for a given purpose.

Sources of Information.—Useful technical information can be gained by the study of manufacturers' advertisements in trade journals and other magazines, by reading the booklets which many large concerns publish about manufacturing processes and methods, and by talking with the salesman who calls at the store. The representative of the manufacturer is usually willing and glad to give information about the goods he handles to the retail salesman who is sufficiently interested to ask for it.

Another convenient source of information regarding the manufacture of almost any product is an encyclopedia. The salesman who is keenly anxious to take an intelligent interest in his merchandise cannot do better than to build up a fundamental groundwork of information by studying this valuable reference work from time to time. If he wishes to go deeper into the study of a technical subject, a public library will as a rule offer him as assortment of books which will describe in greater detail every phase of manufacture and production. Business magazines and the trade journals of his calling should be subscribed to and read as regularly as he reads his newspaper. The retail clerk should bear in mind that if, in addition to proving his ability as a salesman, he combines with this a comprehensive knowledge of certain kinds of goods, he is just the type of man every manufacturer of these particular lines is in search of when in need of recruits for his own sales force. Thus some of the most successful salesmen on the road have risen from the ranks of retail salesmen primarily through their broad knowledge of the merchandise they handle.

The Acquirement of Knowledge Is Always Worth While.—A young salesman in charge of a sporting goods store became interested in firearms and began to study the history of their development. The more he studied, the more fascinated with the subject he became.

It may here be parenthetically remarked that one can begin the study of anything with the feeling that the task is likely to be irksome and disagreeable. But little by little as one acquires knowledge the task becomes less and less irksome until the study of a subject which formerly proved tedious and required an effort of will becomes a positive pleasure.

The salesman soon began to collect old arms and weapons, and he never lost an opportunity to study the mechanism of modern guns and firearms. Such eventually became his enthusiasm that for an hour or two he could narrate facts and details about his specialty which were intensely interesting to the uninitiated listener.

One day he chanced to broach his pet subject to a customer, who remained listening to him for over half an hour in the store. At the close of the interview the customer asked the salesman if he would be willing to talk on the subject of firearms at a forthcoming church club meeting. Consent was gladly given, though the salesman was a little diffident as to his ability to interest an audience for any length of time.

Much to his surprise the talk proved highly successful and led to several other invitations to speak on the same subject. A manufacturer of sporting rifles and ammunition heard of this young retail salesman who so thoroughly knew his goods and invited him to the factory. Impressed with the salesman's knowledge and the clearness with which he expressed himself, the manufacturer offered him a position in the factory with the prospect of becoming assistant sales manager. The offer was promptly accepted. Today that salesman is drawing a handsome salary as sales manager of a large house.

Sooner or later the man who takes the trouble to acquire more than the average knowledge about his business finds bigger responsibilities thrust upon him. The salesman who fails to learn because be sees no opportunity to use the knowledge which he might acquire, or who studies only because such knowledge is essential in his every-day work, remains in the ranks of mediocrity.

The Retail Salesman Must Know His Stock.—To turn from the general to the particular, the fact hardly seems to need emphasis that a retail salesman must have a thorough knowledge of his stock. Yet in every big department store, when something is asked for that is a little out of the way or in little demand, one is frequently confronted with a preplexed salesperson who is not quite sure whether that particular thing is carried in stock and replies, "I must ask the buyer." Salespeople of this type do not utilize their spare moments profitably by studying and arranging their stock. In some cases they do not always know the different styles and sizes of goods nor can they place their hands on them immediately when wanted. A demand for a certain article may necessitate an embarrassing search through the shelves. The salesperson who lacks the small amount of interest to learn thoroughly the kinds and sizes of the stock on hand will rarely develop that additional interest which leads to a store of interesting and exceptional knowledge.

Knowledge Helps to Make Sales Talk Interesting.—The more interestingly a salesman can talk about his goods, the easier it becomes to turn the customer's interest into desire. A fund of interesting facts is to be found in the history of every product. The furniture salesman who knows whence such names as Adams, Puritan, Colonial, Chippendale, Sheraton, and Mission are derived and what they stand for, and who can

detect the spurious and the sham, is obviously of much greater value to his employer, and has a much greater chance of rising to an executive position, than the man whose knowledge is limited to the fact that a certain pattern is of such and such a wood and style and sells for a certain price. The furniture trade affords an opportunity for the study of art in one of its most attractive forms. The salesman might supplement his knowledge of furniture by the study of decoration, wallpapers, color schemes, paints, varnishes, and everything incidental to the embellishment and decoration of the home. From the simple beginning of studying different styles of furniture to a fund of knowledge sufficiently complete to build up a reputation as an expert in interior decoration may seem a far cry; but the salesman who utilizes his spare moments and leisure hours for the acquirement of knowledge of this kind will find it a most fascinating and absorbing study. The man who becomes absorbed in any study soon becomes an expert.

What applies to furniture is applicable to the sale of every other product which is of sufficient dignity and importance to need the services of intelligent salesmanship.

The Use of Eyes and Ears in Acquiring Knowledge.— The emphasis so far laid upon study as a means of acquiring knowledge may create an erroneous impression. While the acquisition of information that is stored in the pages of books or periodicals is important, one must not overlook the fact that the eyes and ears are useful teachers. The salesman on the road, for instance, is constantly meeting interesting people who have valuable information to impart. The opportunity is always present, if he is alert, to pick up new ideas, from either his own or another trade, which with a little adaptation can be utilized by his house; or if his own house cannot profit from the ideas its customers will probably be able to do so.

The salesman who keeps his eyes and ears open in order

to find out and study how the most successful men in his trade carry on their business is frequently able to give his customers advice and suggestions that are of real value. He learns, for example, of a successful selling plan used in one store, a time-saving accounting system in another, or the successful advertising of a third. He takes careful note of the matter and then he passes on this information to those customers whom he thinks most able to utilize it.

Knowledge a Common Bond.—No matter in what capacity a man may be employed, his special knowledge can never be accurate and complete enough nor his general knowledge too extensive. The salesman's work necessitates meeting both the expert who knows all that is to be known about a particular subject and people who will talk to him on matters of general interest or discuss with him current events. We all like to be able to show an intelligent interest in any general subject and to have at least some acquaintance with the principles of the arts and the elementary facts relating to the sciences. The acquisition of such knowledge as this is not, of course, a peculiar requisite of a salesman, but it is advantageous for any man who earns his living by means of his brain. The salesman more than most men, however, needs to round out his expert knowledge with a fund of general information.

CHAPTER XXII

TYPES OF CUSTOMERS

Studying the Buyer.—The necessity of understanding the buyer as well as the commodity has been suggested several times in the course of this text. But now it should be clear that the methods of securing favorable attention, arousing interest, creating desire, and inducing action all require handling in close accordance with the idiosyncrasies and predominating tendencies of the person with whom the salesman is engaged.

Natural Adaptation to the Customer's Mood.—The reason why the salesman needs to study the characteristics of his customer is that he must be able to adapt his manner to that of his customer, so that the interview may proceed pleasantly and speedily.

"But is not this merely sinking one's personality; is it not merely conforming to another's whim so as to get business?" Some such objection as this may occur to the conscientious salesman who wises to retain "the dignity of his personality." Of course, no one has respect for a jellyfish, yet fitting oneself into the mood of the customer does not imply lack of backbone, but rather a nice discernment and tact.

Indeed, one naturally conforms to the individualities and attitudes of friends and acquaintances in social life, whether in reproducing their moods or in assuming one that is responsive and sympathetic, though not by any means identical. A married man presents an entirely different phase of his personality to his wife from that which he uses toward his ten-

year-old son, and displays yet another to his business associates in the office, and still a fourth to casual acquaintances.

What people do with no conscious effort, the salesman should do with skill and understanding, not affectedly, but with the sincere desire for friendly, sympathetic, and serviceable relations.

The Effect of Temperament on the Customer's Attitude.—Different persons, though appealed to in the same manner, vary widely in their actions, according to their personal peculiarities and temperaments. One retail merchant, for instance, may be cautious and deliberate, another nervous and irritable, a third genial yet capricious. Every one of these is actuated in buying by the same motives and is interested in the offer for the same reason—to resell at a profit. Their general mental attitude toward the salesman is the same. Yet each of them is influenced differently by the arguments presented; they view the offer from different angles, because their temperaments or dispositions color their views.

Argument Adapted to Temperament.—While these differences in temperament do not greatly influence the primary buying motive, yet the salesman's manner and method must both be modified to suit the customer's type. Occasionally it may be necessary to appeal to a second and a third motive because of their influence upon a particular temperament.

For example, a nervous, fussy hardware dealer, who inspects every detail of a new offer and needs to be reassured upon every point, might be influenced in his final decision to buy if he were informed that such an article as shade rollers would be packed with screws and thus be all ready for resale, and that instructions for putting up the roller would be included in each package. His instinct of caution is appealed to when he learns that he is to be relieved of the trouble of counting

out screws, wrapping the rollers, and explaining to his customers how to put them up.

A second appeal to such a buyer's instinctive caution might be made. He might be informed that the company represented by the salesman paid the freight and would grant him 30 days' credit—ample time in which to open and check up the goods. This appeal again is more to caution than to the desire for the profit resulting from a saving in freight charges. Further, he might be given a written guarantee that any goods returned as faulty would be promptly replaced. All these selling arguments, directed to the motive of caution, would be much more potent in their appeal to this type of customer than to the type that considers only the profit on any transaction.

An Illustration of Varying the Method.—The need of varying one sales argument to suit different temperaments is illustrated by the following incident:

A budding salesman for a wholesale dry goods house was being shown "how the wheels go round" by one of the older salesmen representing the firm. The two representatives were received with a warm, friendly greeting at almost every place of call. Buyers were well acquainted with the older salesman; they enjoyed his good-humored geniality and his intimate jocularity; many of them regarded him as a personal friend. In consequence his opening greeting in almost every case was that of a man on a familiar footing, who feels sure of his welcome.

When the beginner was finally left to his own resources he came to the conclusion that the "hail-fellow-well-met" attitude was the proper one with which to approach his trade. The first buyer he called on belonged to the genial impulsive type that is always ready to meet a fellow being on intimate ground. The next customer belonged to the cold and calculating type that, as a rule, resents any attempt at familiarity. The salesman

greeted both customers jovially, he commented on the weather, and made a few flippant remarks as to the buyer's stock and the tastefulness of his display. The easy familiarity of the approach caused no offense in the first case and appealed to the buyer's mood; the same approach in the second case caused irritation.

The cold and calculating buyer wanted to hear about the salesman's offer. He was anxious to decide whether the goods were worth his inspection and to return to his work as quickly as possible. So, without any further parley, he broke in irritably: "Well, tell me exactly what you have to show. Be quick, please, I'm busy!"

The tone of voice clearly showed that he was intensely irritated—not so much with the salesman personally as with his method. Instead of cheerfully apologizing and promptly showing his samples, the salesman assumed an air of injured innocence and in an indifferent mood proceeded to display his line. The interview was not a happy one and was soon abruptly brought to a close by the impatient buyer's deciding that he required "nothing at all today." He had invariably given a substantial order when visited by the older salesman. But the inexperience and the ill-judged manner of the young salesman aroused his irritation and led him to cancel the order he fully intended to give to the house with which he had so long done business.

Variations in Individual Mood and Temperament.—All of us are subject to changes of mood; health, weather, the work immediately in hand, private or business conditions, and the like, all influence our feelings. Even in a few moments a man changes from grave to gay, from pessimism to optimism, from doubt to faith. Often enough the salesman cannot determine a prospect's mood until the interview is under way, yet in the majority of cases he can gain some indication or sugges-

tion of the general temper of the prospect before the meeting and when he is preparing his campaign in the preapproach. If he learns that a person is changeable, he is the more ready to encounter an unusual or a passing mood, he is prepared to assume the task of tactfully developing in that prospect the mood that is best adapted to the sale. On the other hand, if he learns that the prospect is always the same, he can prepare a sales plan suited to the dominant characteristics of that prospect with the assurance that a sudden change of method will not be required, so that he is at liberty to work out the details before the interview occurs.

While detailed rules cannot be laid down regarding the probable mood of any class of customers, yet certain general tendencies may well be noted. Impatience or nervousness are to be expected when an unusual pressure of business is on hand; the wholesale salesman avoids occasions of this kind as far as possible, planning his calls so as not to conflict with the reading of mail, dictation of letters, or other scheduled duties and functions; the specialty salesman in his preapproach notes the washing day and cleaning days of the homes at which he is planning to call; the retail salesman prepares for the tension of customers at special sales or during the holiday season. So, too, many prospects are not so easily handled during the half-hour that precedes their accustomed luncheon time. Persons subject to dyspepsia or to severe tension of business or private affairs are to be handled with special consideration. Local or national business conditions likewise affect the moods of many people not directly interested. For example, during hard times even teachers and other salaried folk reflect some measure of the mercantile depression.

The weak salesman finds these factors an excuse for postponing or even omitting calls. One of the common pleas of the half-hearted specialty salesman is "Monday is washday; it's no use trying to see people at their homes then." But he over-

looks the significant fact that large numbers of housewives are in the habit of doing this work, or having it done, on some other day. In any neighborhood where that salesman may be working he will find plenty of prospects who are as approachable on Monday as on any other day. The thoughtless salesman is likely to assume that the hour between half-past eight and half-past nine is unsuitable for office calls because people are then reading mail. This, too, is a question of personal custom; many business men postpone that task until the mail has been sorted and classified for them by a secretary or a stenographer; with them, accordingly, the early morning hour is better for the salesman than a late one. Luncheon hours vary as well, and so do other scheduled tasks. In fact, there is not a business hour in the whole day when prospects cannot be found in comparative inactivity.

Besides, even if the salesman finds that he confronts a preoccupied prospect, he must none the less be able to handle the situation. Withdrawal is at times the sole resource, but often it gives an impression of timidity; a direct and prompt statement of the case is again and again more effective. It is just in circumstances such as these that the true salesman manifests himself through tact and adroit business acumen.

The Futility of Arbitrary Classification.—An attempt to classify every buyer as belonging to some arbitrary and definite type is valueless for the reason that no person can ever be said to belong wholly to one particular class. Human nature is too complex and variable. There are, however, certain mental characteristics that are significant and that appear in some form or another in every buyer, such as caution to the verge of suspicion, or else willingness to take a chance; ability or inability to concentrate; enthusiasm or unemotional stolidity; impatience or deliberation; and so on. Each of these characteristics has its contrasting attribute. A method or manner

of presenting the offer which would appeal in one case would often prove disastrous when used with a contrasting type.

The salesman should therefore vary his manner and modify his sales talk so as to appeal to and avoid irritating a buyer's peculiarities. Nothing in his method of presenting the arguments should irritate the customer. This does not imply the ability of a mind reader or the possession of "second sight." It does, however, mean that the powers of observation must be used at least to the extent of "sizing" up the customer as fully as possible both in the preapproach and in the course of the interview. Having determined that the buyer possesses certain characteristics that make it advisable to treat him in a certain way, the salesman then varies his method accordingly.

The Easy-Going, Good-Natured Type of Buyer.—The salesman will, for instance, frequently come in contact with the good-natured, genial sort of person who is friendly and well disposed to all the world. A customer of this class is as a rule easy to approach—especially if he acts in the capacity of buyer or purchasing agent. If he has any time on his hands and if it is possible to grant an interview, he will do so, even though the salesman may be unknown to him and he does not expect that the proposition will be worth serious consideration.

The manner and ease with which such a type is approached should not make the salesman jump to the conclusion that it will be easy to secure an order. The natural friendliness of this man's disposition makes him greet everybody cordially, but his practical business sense, which is presupposed from the position he holds, will cause him to drive a keen bargain or to postpone action if he thinks he has anything to gain thereby.

In approaching such a type the salesman will naturally greet him on exactly the same footing as he himself is greeted. Then if the buyer cannot be convinced that the offer is a timely one, the salesman can at least suggest the hope of better

results in the future; for this reason he will persist in calling with the expectation of receiving an order. Where there is little to choose on the score of price, quality, and terms between the goods offered and those of competitors, the only chance of influencing a buyer of this type is to cultivate friendly relations, a point discussed in Chapter XVIII.

The Cold, Critical Buyer.—The cold and critical customer is in direct contrast to the preceding type. His usual greeting is curt and abrupt. "Well what do you want?" or "What have you to show today?" or "I have little time to spare—be quick," he snaps out. His manner conveys the impression that the salesman must be brief about his business if the offer is to receive consideration.

To the inexperienced salesman this type of customer is disconcerting. It should, however, be remembered that if the goods are what is claimed for them, it is to the buyer's interest to inspect them and give them every consideration. Therefore the salesman should not allow an abrupt manner to fluster him in any way or to curtail the proper presentation of his argument.

When samples or catalogs are displayed, the critical type usually avoids making any favorable comment and expresses himself only when he has something to say that detracts from the value of the goods. It is impossible to work him up to the point of acknowledging his interest, and in consequence the salesman is frequently at a loss to understand what impression his sales talk is making.

In handling this type the salesman should not allow his own conviction of the merit of his offer to be in any way shaken by the customer's cold and cautious attitude. He should go straight to the point, giving an adequate description of his goods, with earnestness, but without any open expression of enthusiasm. A reasoned appeal to the motive of profit, which in such case is paramount, is usually all that is needed. Finally

when the time comes to close the sale, he should express his pent-up enthusiasm in one strong blast in which the numerous advantages of the offer are summed up. It is important to impress this type of buyer with the fact that the salesmen's opinion of the goods has in no way been shaken by the customer's indifference. The salesman may not be able perceptibly to thaw the buyer with the heat of his own enthusiasm, but insensibly his earnest belief in the merit of the offer will produce an effect.

Do Not Teach the Buyer His Own Business.—A word of caution is necessary in regard to the handling of the cold and critical customer just mentioned. When approaching a wholesale buyer or a purchasing agent of this type, tact is needed to guard against making any statement which may seem to imply that the salesman considers that he has a greater knowledge of the buyer's business than the latter himself possesses. A person of this disposition usually resents the assumption of superior knowledge in others. A further mistake is to be too loquacious and to insist upon explaining something which is already known or which can be deduced.

The Self-Important Type of Buyer.—The self-important type of customer is sure to be met with in the course of the day's work and the salesman's attitude must again be modified to suit this characteristic. This type can often be recognized by the favorite trick of keeping the salesman, after he is shown into his presence, waiting for a few moments while he attends to an apparently important but probably trivial detail of work. Instead of presenting the argument in the form of emphatic assertion, supported if possible by proof—as would be the logical method in the presence of a man who is cautious and undecided—the statements should be turned so as to present them in the form of queries which will enable the buyer to air

his own opinions. When these opinions run counter to those of the salesman the customer does not scruple to depreciate the offer. But the salesman need not worry much about this in the early part of the interview. It is only one of the buyer's little ways.

The weak place in the armor of a man of this type is his conceit. He is clever, but he over-rates his own ability. When once he decides that a thing is so, the matter is closed. To question the correctness of his decision or to attempt to explain to him that he is in error and that his conclusions are mistaken, is almost fatal to a sale.

The successful handling of such a customer largely depends upon the skill with which all open contradiction is avoided and an expression of his own opinion secured, as to points which are outside of controversy. "What is your opinion of this, Mr. King?"; "I should like to know whether you don't . . ." —and similar queries should precede all the claims and statements made. His favorable opinions as to merits of the various points of an offer can often be extracted in this way.

When the proposition is such that a decision at the first interview is difficult to obtain, the self-important type of buyer can often be encouraged to come to the point if addressed somewhat as follows:

"Mr. King, I know from experience that many of my customers like to take time to consider this matter. But, *you,* I believe, can tell almost at a glance what its merits really are. You are the sort of man who can trust his own judgment and make up his own mind. I won't ask you to take time in order to look into it—it isn't necessary in your case. How many dozen will you require?"

This assumes, what is usually the case, that the buyer is an able person, capable as well as fond of forming his opinions with as little suggestion as possible from others. In short, agree with this buyer whenever possible, ask for information

from him when opportunity offers, convey the impression that you are willing to learn from him, and then if he can give you an order he will do so. But aggravate him or injure his pride and whatever the merits of an offer he will be blind to them.

Other Types of Buyers.—It would be possible to list a number of widely distinctive types and to suggest different methods of treatment in each case. The examples given, however, are sufficient to indicate various methods of procedure.

A buyer may lean rather to one type than to another and yet reveal combination of several characteristics. The method that suits a particular case must be largely what is indicated by tact and common sense. When certain mental characteristics are revealed in a pronounced degree, special treatment will naturally suggest itself. This chapter will serve its purpose if the salesman will remember to vary his methods so as to suit different characteristics and thus avoid getting into a rut, as he does when he delivers the same sales talk in a stereotyped way.

CHAPTER XXIII

CHARACTERISTIC RETAIL TYPES

The Occasion for the Study of Retail Types.—Most people who enter a retail store know definitely what they want to buy; the majority of these know what they want and have an equally decided idea as to the price they are prepared to pay. The housewife who comes with a long list of purchases, the woman who is looking for a particular garment, or the girl who is choosing a hat or a pair of shoes, usually knows what she wants and is determined to find it even if she must inspect a dozen windows or almost as many stores before she discovers it. Consequently, it is not so essential for the retail salesperson to be able to read character or to vary the method of showing the goods when dealing with persons of different temperament, as it is to be patient and courteous and to wait upon customers with a sincere desire to please. A sale will then be made if the goods in stock are those that the customer is in search of.

There are, however, certain types of shoppers who must be handled with peculiar tact if they are to be catered to successfully and if their patronage is to be permanently retained. As these two types form a considerable proportion of the feminine shoppers who frequent the large stores, it is well to consider their peculiarities in detail.

The Nervous, Irritable, Querulous Shopper.—This type of shoppers is not infrequently met with, especially in the larger cities where wealth and fashion holds sway. She is merely a spoiled child in adult form whose every whim must be gratified.

She is used to having her own way, used to being waited upon; she cannot bear opposition; if she fails to find exactly what pleases her or that she is in search of—and frequently she does not know what she wants—she resents the fact as a lack of courtesy on the part of the store and the salesperson who represents it. Because of the irritability of her mental outlook, when she enters the store she expects to receive poor service; she is prepared to resent it, and if she fails to receive it, will still remain querulous. Her request to be shown any particular goods is usually made in a complaining tone of voice. When the article asked for is submitted for her approval she carefully inspects it in search of faults or flaws. If no blemish can be discovered in its quality or style then she either says, "This isn't just what I want," or she begins to question the price, the size, or what-not. No matter what might be shown her she would still have some complaint to make and under no circumstances would she express her complete satisfaction.

Handling the Querulous Shopper.—It is human nature to feel impatient with this type of customer and to experience a lively desire to give her a good shaking. This is obviously an emotion that the salesperson should severely restrain. Often the clerk who starts out with an earnest desire to please reveals indifference to the requirements of such a customer before the sale is completed and forgets that polite attention to a customer's whims should in all circumstances be the distinguishing mark of the efficient salesperson.

This type of customer can be successfully catered to if it is remembered that her mental attitude toward the store and its employees is not personal but is her usual demeanor to mankind at large. Therefore no resentment should be revealed at her querulous criticism; on the contrary her whims must be patiently attended to as forming part of the day's work. All criticism should be met with a courteous manner and without

any open contradiction. Prompt and intelligent answers should be given to questions, but without volunteering information unless desired. The salesperson should make only such comments as, "This color matches your sample exactly, Madam," or "This is a new kind of cretonne," or "This serge will wear well and does not shine readily. . . ." No direct suggestions should be made as to what the shopper ought to buy. It will suffice if the features of the goods are explained without any attempt to influence her in her decision. Any advice proffered invariably arouses impatience and a desire to run directly opposite to it—simply out of contrariness.

The foregoing analysis, of course, presents an extreme case. The type varies from the extreme whom nothing can please, to the much milder type who is merely slightly querulous and whose manner is occasionally illumined with moments of reasonableness. One and all, however, offer an unrivaled opportunity to school oneself in the art of perfect self-control. If the salesperson refrains from revealing the slightest impatience and shows that even the patronage of the customer who is crotchety and hard to please is appreciated by the store, if a willingness is also revealed to show everything in stock that in any way suits her requirements, even a customer of extreme mental irritability will begin to feel that at last she has discovered that ideal salesperson who really "understands her," and then the sale will be made. What is more, many repeat orders will probably follow.

The Irresolute, Garrulous Shopper.—This type of woman loves to shop. She is happy in wandering through department stores looking for bargains. She may start her day's trip with a list of half a dozen things required and return home with a score or more of purchases to her credit—if she can afford such expenditure. Because she enjoys the excitement of shopping she does not readily come to a decision, although she

quickly reveals enthusiasm when anything is shown that is to her liking. When, however, the salesman gets out his sales slip preparatory to taking her order she begins to wonder whether something she inspected elsewhere would not be better suited for her purpose. The more articles she has to choose from, the more difficult it becomes for her to make up her mind; yet she will continue to inspect goods as long as the salesman is willing to pile them on the counter.

The salesman who leaves the decision wholly to this type of customer spend many fruitless hours in searching for just the offering that will satisfy her whims in every way. Wholly different tactics must be applied. Instead of allowing her to decide of her own free will, as in the case of the preceding example, tactful suggestions must be made to help her make up her mind, even to the point of telling her exactly what she needs. To do this she should be questioned as to the use to which she will put the article she is seeking.

Suppose a woman of this type enters a dry goods store and asks to see some cretonne. The salesman immediately places several designs on the counter and notices whether a large or small pattern attracts the shopper's attention. He also observes which colors seem to please her most. With these two points decided he will be able to concentrate her attention on certain patterns when the time to close the sale arrives. By asking how the cretonne is to be used and what colors predominate in the room where it is to be hung, the salesman limits the number of patterns that need to be shown.

When these points are decided he can become more definite and positive in his suggestions. He decides that certain patterns, while charming, are not suited to her particular purpose and so he removes them from sight. When the choice finally rests with two or three patterns and the customer still remains undecided, the salesman takes up the one which in design and color seemed most to appeal to her at first and says, "All things

considered, Madam, this is the one pattern for your purpose. You say it is to be used with a north light, so you must of course have something with gold in it. As it is for your daughter's room you want something dainty, and this certainly is dainty. This exactly fills the bill, and you could not find anything better if made for you."

Here he should sweep all the other patterns to one side, continuing, "Just notice how effective it looks in the length. Isn't it charming? And it is a design that you never tire of. The color will blend with all other colors, in any light. How many yards did you say you required?"

The shopper may agree with the salesman but still add: "Yes, I like that, but let me look at the other patterns again."

To this the salesman may reply, "With pleasure, Madam, but I should be sorry to see you select anything but the one in front of you, for this, in my opinion, is much more suitable. No other pattern has these delicious gold stripes and that is just what sets off a room with a north light."

Her possible reply may be: "Yes, perhaps you are right. How much did you say this was?"

"Two dollars a yard, Madam. And how many yards?"

"I think I shall need about 12."

"Twelve yards of this will cost you $24, Madam. Where shall I send it?"

Thus the sale is closed. The indecision of a buyer of this type is often due to lack of confidence in her own judgment. The salesman's positive assurance supplies the courage needed to make the expenditure.

The Occasional Customer.—Many people make a practice of buying one commodity here, another there, a third elsewhere, even though all three might well be purchased in one store. For some reason, either emotional or logical, they have acquired the habit and are not easily diverted from it. To try forcing

their interest or their desire is likely to drive them away.

Yet to sell them the one commodity that they habitually purchase without any effort to increase the field of sale is likewise poor policy. Quiet persistence from day to day and week to week is sure to pay in the end. If the customer's attention is pleasantly called to the other offerings of special value, one day this, another that, and so on, he is kept aware of the chief lines of goods carried by the firm and in an emergency of any sort will recall them. For example, a grocer regularly supplied a customer with eggs and butter and nothing else. However, he genially indicated this and that article whenever she visited the store; one day he said, "We are arranging to supply all our regular customers with cider during this fall; I should very much like you to have a gallon." She murmured an indefinite reply, much as usual, and left. But the next morning she called up and asked him to send a trial gallon to her home and within the week had given him an order for a gallon a week until the close of the season. This order was the point of the wedge; little by little she developed an increasing trade with the grocer, leaving her other tradesmen for him.

In the department store it is not always easy to tell the occasional customer from the buyer who does practically all her shopping there. But as a considerable number buy from several houses it is always good policy, under normal conditions, to suggest not only other articles that the salesperson herself is able to show but also such goods as may be needed to supplement them which can be secured in other departments. The cretonne salesman on taking an order can mention curtain rods, fringe, wallpaper, and so forth, goods that lead the customer to visit other departments with which she is not so familiar.

The Telephone Customer.—The buyer who orders supplies by telephone is often prone to question the quality of the

goods she receives. And there has been justification for this doubt at times. It is but human nature to pay more attention to the selection of a cut of meat for a customer standing at the counter than for someone whose order is on a scribbled list. This tendency to slight the telephone customers is obviously unfair and also bad business. That customer is of a type that is ready to spare herself exertion, whether through fatigue, poor health, or pressure of other affairs; though not necessarily a spendthrift she is not a close-fisted type as a rule. Consequently her custom is decidedly worth retaining and special pains should be taken to see that the telephone customer is satisfied with goods and likewise with service.

The Impatient Customer.—The sole point to be emphasized beyond the manifest need of courtesy and promptness is this: other customers must not be sacrificed to the impatience of a buyer or a prospect either by waiting upon the impatient one out of turn without special reason given and apologies offered and accepted by the other customers, or else by the salesman allowing his own manner to become affected unfavorably by the hurried manner.

The Ignorant Customer.—That the salesman usually knows far more of the goods than the customer has already been discussed. The type of customer here to be considered is the one who is lacking in even elementary knowledge. The explanations must be especially simple, the courtesy shown must be easy and yet absolutely obvious. Uneducated persons do a great deal of buying, they generally are self-conscious; consequently those merchants and salespersons who treat them most pleasingly secure a trade that may grow to large amounts. Consideration for this type of customer is all too frequently lacking, an error that leads to the profit of other firms in their custom.

The Non-English-Speaking Customer.—Except in the more exclusive stores in the larger cities, the retail salesman has to wait upon people who do not speak English readily and whose knowledge of the language is so limited that they understand but little of what we regard as common expressions. This type of customer is cautious in buying; her lack of knowledge of the language leads to a more or less helpless attempt to follow the suggestions and reasoning of the salesperson; her final decision, to buy or to decline, is based more on the manner of the salesperson than on the actual words. It is not unusual for such a customer to bring a friend with her to act as interpreter, though that friend may have but slight command of English.

In any case the salesperson's manner is of the most vital importance. A foolish comment to a fellow salesman, a "meaning glance," an indifferent pose, and all other attitudes of dis taste or ridicule are signs in a language that is universally understood and needs no skill to read. As with the ignorant type of customer, any suggestion of discourtesy in act or thought is a justifiable cause for resentment and a refusal to consider buying.

Children.—Children should be attended to in their "turn" just as adults. Most little folks appreciate any special attention (as indeed who does not), such as an inquiry after a sister or a brother, or some trifling gift in the nature of an advertising novelty, a picture card, or the like.

This latter point is determined by the manager of the store; a policy of this kind is far reaching in its effects and must not be violated any more than any other rule of the firm; while apparently trifling it may have been established only after months or even years of experience. A butcher made a practice of cutting off a slice of bologna sausage and giving it to the children sent to him for purchases; "no harm in that" you

think, perhaps, and yet many parents objected. The butcher abandoned the custom but for some months the children regarded him with suspicion. A stationery and candy and magazine dealer often bestowed some trifling bit of candy on the children who ran in for this or that in the course of the morning or afternoon errands. He did this in the goodness of his heart, not for the sake of bribing them to deal with him, but because he was specially fond of bright faces and fun. But he had to give up the practice; "I found that they expected the candy as a right," he said one day to a school teacher who lived near by. He had violated the rule of fair and square dealing; for though he was trying to make them happy, in reality he was encouraging selfishness. The child, like any other customer, must have his due, that treatment which is best fitted to satisfy legitimate needs and maintain a sound business fellowship. Further, the good-will of today's children is the basis of the store's business ten years hence.

The patronizing air that some mistaken salespersons assume towards children is as offensive to the children as to an adult. A spirit of comradeship is excellent, one of condescension absolutely wrong.

The Sympathetic Attitude.—Throughout the salesman's work his attitude toward the customer must be sympathetic in the true sense of that rather abused term; that is, he must recognize and adapt himself to the feelings and views of the buyer, but without familiarity, for that is impertinent. In a word, the retail salesman's attitude to all customers should be friendly but not familiar; he should welcome every incoming customer as an invited guest to the store—we have all become irritated at waiting for attention without receiving even the scantiest of recognition—and be pleasantly attentive to the customer's comments.

CHAPTER XXIV

THE MAKE-UP OF PERSONALITY

The Salesman's All-Round Development.—We will assume that the advice and suggestions as to the preparation of the sales talk have been followed. We will also assume that the art of playing the game alertly and resolutely during the interview has been studied and practiced.

So far the instruction has been definite and related to particular problems. To profit to the full extent from the technique thus acquired entails the study of one other important factor in the make-up of the perfect salesman. We have now to consider the general, all-round make-up of the man himself; this includes the development of all the powers summed up in the word "personality."

The Effect of Personality.—One salesman is received with a welcoming smile by strangers; another is greeted apathetically or coldly. If they are known to the customer and have called on him many times before, to one a genial welcome and an attentive hearing are accorded, to the other an indifferent greeting, with a half-concealed desire to hear what he has to say as quickly as possible—probably with a view to a speedy disappearance.

The two salesmen may be fairly equal in ability, in character, and in knowledge of their goods. Why is it that one is granted a willing and attentive ear, while the other meets with indifference and even impatience? It is a question of personality. One salesman, outwardly and subconsciously, impresses

you with the force or with the geniality of his character. The appearance and manner of the other reveals no such compelling or attracting power.

The Indefinable Thing Termed "Personality."—Personality is difficult to analyze and define. It implies the possession of certain qualities which enable one man to win out where another who is deficient in these qualities, because he has failed to develop them, will fail.

Personality, therefore, is more than mere physical attraction. A man who is handicapped by his appearance or his lack of inches may still impress others with his personality. Personality is the blending of several positive attributes, such as enthusiasm, sincerity, earnestness, breadth, depth, tact, imagination, health, vitality, and so on. These attributes taken together round out the man and form a character that instinctively we like, admire, and trust.

A man whose positive traits are developed into a strong personality will do far more with a given situation than a man who has made no conscientious effort to develop his powers in general. The man with a personality inspires confidence. We are ready to believe what he has to say. The salesman who has developed his mental and moral qualities so that they are reflected in his words and in the truth and clarity of his statements, is able to impress others with the force of his character. He can handle many a difficult situation with success where the man whose personality is merely negative or undeveloped will fail.

The all-round cultivation of personality is thus an important part of every salesman's study and preparatory work. If you "mean business" and want to be learning and improving all the time, the study is essential. Only the man who persistently seeks out his weaknesses and strives to eradicate them by the development of positive traits, working during his free

hours as well as when on duty, can hope to climb high in the ranks of salesmanship.

How Personality Can be Developed.—You will readily acknowledge that so far as outward appearance is concerned your personality is largely under your own control. You will also concede that your general manner—the self-control and courtesy of your bearing, the tone of your voice, the tact you show in not openly contradicting a customer and in avoiding topics which irritate or antagonize—these important points which help to make up a pleasing personality, are also under your control. Can you not go further? As you think the matter over, will you not admit that other traits which reflect inward personality or character are in their expression and development almost, if not quite, as much under your control as these superficial traits of manner and appearance?

If, therefore, you can improve and develop your personality by the care and attention which you pay to outward and plainly visible things, why can you not improve and develop your character by the care and attention you pay to those qualities which help to mold and form the inner man?

Why the Study of Personality Comes Last.—The discussion of the development of personality in the salesman's general training has been reserved until the study of definite technical matters has been completed. This seems the best arrangement for two reasons.

After the salesman has acquired a technical knowledge of the details of his business and has had frequent opportunity to put the theoretical side of his study into actual practice, he is better able to appreciate the important part that personality plays in salesmanship. He needs the school of experience to reveal to him his weaknesses and strength. To consider the development of personality as the first step in the study of

salesmanship before the student has acquired a rudimentary knowledge of what this study and practice entails, would be very much like erecting a large and handsome flight of steps leading to the porch of a house before the construction of the building itself.

The study of personality should also be left as the final chapter in the salesman's education, because personality is an all-inclusive term. If taken analytically, it might be subdivided into hundreds of traits. To treat the subject in that way would be interesting for the reader, but the salesman would not find it very helpful as a course of practical study which he might definitely apply. Indeed, such a method of treating the subject would be confusing for the man in search of concrete advice and definite suggestions as a guide to the development of his own personality.

A preferable course, and the one here adopted, is to summarize the subject in a few main points, which, when taken together, will be found to cover the whole case. Then the student is in a better position to see the relationship of these main points to the whole subject and to work each out systematically and in detail.

How to Make the Study Practical.—To make the advice of practical value an attempt is made to present it in a form that will enable the salesman to map out a definite course of procedure. This course will as infallibly lead to the improvement of his own personality in those traits in which he is weakest, or which as yet are undeveloped, as a course of instruction in swimming if perseveringly practiced will lead to the acquirement of the art.

The development of personality is considered in six chapters under the same number of heads. First in importance comes enthusiasm. Enthusiasm is the steam that drives the engine—the yeast that leavens the mass of dough. Enthusiasm, how-

ever, may run to waste, or, unless supported by the habit of industry, it may die down. The next chapter, therefore, deals with the acquirement of the habit of industry.

However enthusiastically and industriously a salesman may work, much of his effort is marred if he neglects certain little things in dress, speech, manner, and deportment. Superficially these may seem unimportant, but if ignored they may and often will prove a severe handicap. In consequence the study of these minor details must form part of the study of personality. This naturally leads to the consideration of manners and courtesy in a separate chapter.

As the salesman acquires the habit of industry, works with enthusiasm, and strives to apply the theory of his study in his practical work day by day, insensibly he will be developing that side of his character which reveals itself in the two essential attributes of salesmanship—courage and tact.

Courage is largely founded on confidence in oneself and belief in one's ability to cope with any situation. Courage, therefore, grows with experience. Tact is a sensitiveness to moods and impressions and the effect of one's words and actions on others. When tact is lacking it can be developed only in the field of experience. Therefore the systematic methods of conscious, deliberate acquirement that apply to the traits already mentioned do not apply so well to these two ultimate characteristics of the man who wants to climb high.

If you study the theory of the subject, however, and steadily put into practice the advice that you find suitable to a given case, you will find yourself gradually developing these characteristics of courage and tact which are the distinguishing marks of the man engaged in the higher flights of salesmanship. The development of these two attributes summarizes, in a sense, everything that is covered in this or any other treatise on salesmanship.

CHAPTER XXV

THE LEAVEN OF ENTHUSIASM

The Sparkle of Salesmanship.—Just about 50 per cent of all big successes, whether in business, art, science, or politics, can be attributed to enthusiasm. The salesman who wishes to climb and to climb high must be enthusiastic about his work. He must be brimful of vim. When he lacks this vim or zest, he is like an unpolished diamond—he lacks sparkle.

Enthusiasm is the quality that makes a man express his belief with the intense earnestness and sincerity needed to carry conviction. The man who is enthusiastic simply overflows with his belief in himself, his goods, and the advantage of his offer. Consequently the first and the most important of all requisites for the salesman who wants to work with full efficiency is to believe enthusiastically in himself and in the merits of his proposition.

The Contagious Effect of Enthusiasm.—Enthusiasm is effective because of its psychological effect upon the salesman, and second, because this effect reacts in many ways upon the customer. Enthusiasm is contagious. The dynamic, cherful salesman, who is brimming over with vim and energy, can pass along his enthusiasm just as a coil of wire carrying a current of electricity induces a current in the coil that it surrounds. When we earnestly believe a thing, whether or not others can share in our belief, at least they are impressed with our earnestness. The salesman who is alive with enthusiasm can make contact with even the customer who is an habitual

grouch. However hard a nut to crack any man may be, he is insensibly affected by another's enthusiasm and belief in himself.

Enthusiasm Breaks Down Opposition.—The following episode illustrates the effect of enthusiasm on others:

A salesman handling an expensive line of calendars called on a retail grocer who made a practice of giving away this kind of advertisement at Christmas time. The time of the salesman's call was early in July. When he explained his mission, the grocer, who was evidently in an irritable mood, snapped out, "Don't waste your time and mine. I have made up my mind not to think of calendars for three months. There is nothing doing—absolutely nothing."

"But," said the salesman.

"It's no use," interrupted the grocer. "I tell you I have made up my mind. You are about the sixth calendar man who has been worrying me this week. Get out!"

"Very well, Mr. Jones," he coolly and persistently replied, "we will talk about the order later. There is just one thing I want to say, with your permission. If I were a retailer like yourself, and wanted to give my customers the smartest calendar I could find and the salesman didn't give me a chance to see his full selection, I should feel that I had not been treated squarely. Wouldn't you, if you were in my shoes?"

The dealer was forced to concede that he would feel offended by such treatment.

"Now, Mr. Jones, you may not know it, but I am more enthusiastic about the designs I have in my sample case than about anything I have ever shown to you. You know that as the season advances certain designs have to be withdrawn when all the calendars that can be produced from them in time for Christmas are sold. It would never do to sell the same calendar to two or three dealers in the same town. If you wait

until October before seeing the designs, the most popular and therefore the most desirable will already have been selected by the early birds.

"Mr. Jones, why not be the early bird that catches the proverbial worm? In your own interest I want you to see what splendid novelties I have, and I want you to look at them now. Then if any particular one interests you, I will hold it for you until October, when you can give me your order and instructions for printing. If I can save an especially attractive calendar for you that otherwise you would miss, I believe you will thank me for my insistence at this time. I am absolutely sure I have the pick of this year's designs with me now. They are simply splendid. Three months later I shouldn't be half so enthusiastic about my line."

"All right," said the grocer grudgingly, "I will look at your samples; but, understand, I will not buy today."

"That's understood," answered the salesman.

An inspection of the designs revealed one calendar which especially appealed to the grocer. "That certainly is unusual," he said with interest.

"Yes," said the salesman, "that design has already proved so popular that I know it will have to be withdrawn before the end of this month. By the way, how many calendars do you use every year, Mr. Jones?"

"About 5,000."

"Well, why not let me reserve 5,000 for you. Don't bother about the order until you are ready."

The salesman left with a signed order and all instructions as to printing, delivery to be made in November. Only his own enthusiastic belief in the merits of his designs enabled him to arouse sufficient interest for an inspection of his samples.

The Effect of Enthusiasm upon Temperament.—Enthusiasm has a beneficial effect upon temperament as well as upon

manner. It keeps a man going. It gives him faith that he can do what he sets out to do. Difficulties loom large when we are tired, indolent, or timid. But enthusiasm banishes fatigue or dismay and we brush the obstacles aside.

Part of every salesman's difficulty is his own feeling towards his prospects. He may feel doubtful of success or he may, because of his apathetic interest in his job, be unsympathetic, contemptous, or careless. If one is governed by any of these feelings, it is hard to sound a chord of sympathy or interest and thus hold the attention of others. A salesman who is in any of these moods dissipates his resources. The man who is enthusiastic conserves his powers and applies them with a concentrated will to succeed that inspires confidence in others.

Loyalty and Belief in One's House.—Another aspect of enthusiasm is loyalty. To remain loyal to the house he represents, a salesman must have confidence in its integrity and belief in its methods. A man whose enthusiasm in his work is founded on this belief will find it easy and natural to be loyal to his house in word and deed.

To enjoy this belief, it is not necessary to be associated with the most important or the best known house in the trade; provided a firm treats its men fairly and squarely and is honest in the statements it makes about the goods they handle, the house will merit their confidence. The salesman's faith in the house he represents and in its ideals will then react favorably upon his enthusiastic belief in himself and his offer.

It is true that many a salesman represents a house which merits his loyalty and yet he fails to develop this fine trait. Such a man does not ring true. His character is in some way warped. If his firm feels that he lacks loyalty, no reliance will be placed in him and no important executive position will be open to him, however brilliant he may be. Enthusiastic loyalty

is an essential trait which as a rule distinguishes the man who rises to a position of any responsibility. It is equivalent to the citizen's devotion to his country. The man who lacks loyalty is a traitor to his trade.

Example of the Result of Loyalty.—A traveling salesman representing a glue house was approached by the sales manager of a competing firm just before starting on one of his periodical trips. The sales manager offered him a position at a considerable advance in salary, provided he would leave his present firm at once and cover the same territory for the competing concern.

"I appreciate your offer," said the salesman. "Naturally I want to make as much money for myself as I can, but it would not be fair to my house to leave it at a minute's notice and under such conditions."

The sales manager increased the offer, but the salesman refused to consider it under the conditions attached thereto. He wanted a bigger salary, but he declined to do anything that was disloyal to his present firm. So, without discussing the matter any further by making an alternative suggestion, he started on his trip.

In due time he returned from a successful journey. On entering the factory he was called into the president's office and his chief said to him:

"I am very glad you declined the offer you received before you started out on your last trip. Your work has been excellent; you have shown unusual ability—so much so that we had you in mind for an important position. The present sales manager retires in a year's time and I thought somewhat of you as his assistant with the idea that you should take over his duties when he retires.

"I happened to hear of the offer recently made you and of your attitude. This test has proved that you are the man for us."

Loyalty Must be Revealed in Little Things.—Many a man will remain loyal to the house in big things and still fail to reveal that breadth of character that is shown through loyalty in little things. It is disloyal to complain to outsiders, for instance, about the rules and policies of a firm, to criticize its methods, or to air an opinion as to one's own worth and its lack of recognition by the house. A loyal employee never does anything to injure his firm's best interests, even though to do so may appear to be to his advantage. A salesman is paid not only for his time and efforts, but for his faithfulness to the house he serves. Unless a man has that enthusiastic belief in the policy of his house as a whole which tends to develop the spirit of loyalty, he should seek another connection in which this spirit will find freer play.

How to Develop Enthusiasm.—In generating the driving force of enthusiasm the first requisite is for the salesman to enjoy his work and to throw himself eagerly into the game. The secret of eagerness and enjoyment of work lies in interest, and interest is dependent upon study and analysis. The more the salesman studies the business side of his particular sphere of work and analyzes his offer, the more interested will he become in his work, and the more eager will he be to put to practical test the theories he has worked out in his own mind.

When a man works because he enjoys working and not merely to earn so much a week, failures never dampen his enthusiasm. He analyzes his failures, he studies their causes, and he enthusiastically looks out for another opportunity to succeed where formerly he failed. The salesman who does not enjoy his daily job works under low pressure and lacks those few extra pounds of steam which will help carry him over many a steep peak.

Enthusiasm the Fruit of Confidence and Belief.—The salesman who lacks confidence in the merits of his offer can

never be really enthusiastic. When the customer raises objections and mentions the advantages of competing goods he feels discouraged. Many prospects are not interested in the offer; others are impatient and brusque at the opening of the interview; others again declare that they know nothing about the product, do not care to know, and would not buy if they did—for reasons which they explain in more or less detail. The salesman must have the utmost confidence in the merits of his proposition and the firm he represents, if he is to face buyers of this type with the serene enthusiasm that can alone break down opposition.

To have confidence in himself and to believe enthusiastically in his offer, the salesman must have more than a superficial acquaintance with the advantages of his proposition; he must be immensely interested in every detail from every point of view—whether of service, utility, or the pleasure which can be derived from its use. If his goods have a style or fashion appeal, he must take sufficient interest in the artistic side of his wares to become enthusiastic about these special points of merit. If his goods appeal on the score of serviceability, he must be so interested in their mode of manufacture and the quality of their material that he is able to explain enthusiastically why they will render exceptional service. In short, the more interested he is in every detail and the more anxious he is to ferret out "reasons why" differences in style and quality exist, the more enthusiastic will the salesman tend to become when explaining their merits.

The Reaction of Industry on Enthusiasm.—The salesman who works with enthusiasm is like a compound reciprocating engine. His enthusiasm does not run to waste. It reacts upon his work habit. The more pleasure he derives from his daily task, the more anxious he is to get to his job. Half-hearted interest and a desire to quit work as soon as a reason-

able excuse can be made, vanish under the spell of enthusiasm. Thus the harder a man works, the more enthusiasm he generates, and this enthusiasm again tends to keep him continually on the job until the energetic work habit becomes a second nature.

CHAPTER XXVI

THE HABIT OF INDUSTRY

Industry the Fly-Wheel of Enthusiasm.—Important as enthusiasm is in a salesman's make-up it is well to remember that no man can work full pressure all the time. Enthusiasm cannot always be kept up. Success itself inevitably brings reaction. Outside circumstances, such as the weather or local conditions, may be unfavorable to vim and fervor. The energy which is based chiefly on enthusiasm is for these reasons uneven and not always to be relied upon.

Many a salesman is enthusiastic—but only in spurts and splashes. His enthusiasm is never sustained for long. It reaches high water mark after one or two successful sales but after a few failures it begins to fall. Then if the day happens to be rainy or if he does not feel in the mood for work, his enthusiasm sinks to zero.

The governor of the fly-wheel of enthusiasm, which will control it at a steady pace all the time, is the habit of industry.

The Effect of Industry upon Temperament.—Enthusiasm can be steadily and persistently generated only when it is supported by an acquired habit of work. The first effect of this habit is that it teaches one to give concentrated attention to the task in hand and keeps one from being distracted by any outside influences. A postman hardly notices the weather. He wouldn't think of delaying the delivery of the mail because it happened to be raining. A man accustomed to a noisy office works at his desk unaware of the noise round about him.

When a salesman has acquired the habit of industry, outside influences, whether favorable or unfavorable, affect him but little. Some days will have their disappointment and disillusions; others will be more successful than the average. Both tend to produce corresponding feelings of depression or elation. Some men, for example, are apt to relax after any success and take it easy for a while; others lose their nerve and slow down when things do not go their way. If the habit of industry has schooled the salesman to stick to a regular day's routine, good or bad fortune are all the same to him. He keeps working away all the time.

A salesman will never make the most of his opportunities and pile success upon success until he acquires the same habits of regular and punctual work that are required and insisted upon in every well-disciplined office, factory, or other organization.

Where Lack of Self-Discipline Proved Fatal.—A salesman received a telephone call at his hotel from the leading jeweler in the town he was visiting and from whom he had that day received an order. The message requested him to be at the jeweler's store promptly at 8.30 the following morning. The representative replied that he would certainly be there at that time.

At 8.25 the next morning he was still finishing his breakfast. While eating, his thoughts ran something like this: "There's no great hurry; he has ordered all the goods he needs; he doesn't usually get down to the store until 9.00, so there's plenty of time."

The salesman arrived at the store at 8.50. As he entered, the jeweler merely nodded to the greeting of "Good morning!" His manner and silence perplexed the salesman, who opened the interview with the query:

"Well, what is it you wish to see me about this morning?

Everything was all right in the order you gave me yesterday, I hope."

"I don't want to see you now," replied the jeweler.

"But you rang me up last night and asked me to down here this morning," expostulated the salesman.

"Yes, I did," was the answer, "and I asked you to be here at 8.30. A cousin from Minneapolis wanted to order some of those rings I bought from you yesterday. He had to catch the 9 o'clock train out of town and he has already left. As you were not here for your appointment, we concluded you didn't want the order."

"But I didn't know you wanted to give me an order," replied the salesman. "If you had said so over the phone, I would have made a point of being here on time."

"Yes, I understand," replied the jeweler. "You'll be here on the minute if it's to your advantage. But, if you don't think it is, then the appointment has no value in your eyes. Don't trouble to call here again."

A lucrative connection was broken.

The salesman who seriously wants to acquire the right habit of work which includes punctuality and strict attention to business appointments, must discipline himself. He then tends to be less unstable; his temperament becomes more even; and he produces energy at much less cost that the individual who relies largely upon spurts of enthusiasm. When the habit of industry is acquired it is natural to be punctual and to do the thing promised. The industrious man does quietly and efficiently what would require a big effort of will and a good deal of fuss if one were without this wholesome habit.

The Importance of the Work Habit in Salesmanship.— For the salesman the habit of industry is especially important, because he usually lacks the moral support of working with associates and under immediate supervision. The man who

is paid on commission is inclined to excuse himself for not adhering to regular hours of work on the score that he is his own master. This type of salesman comes to the conclusion that it is hopeless to call on customers before 10 o'clock, because they are invariably occupied with their correspondence; for similar reasons he cannot call after 4 o'clock in the afternoon; while to try to work on Saturday morning is a shear waste of time.

Lacking the habit of regular work and regular hours he is continually making excuses to himself for not working. In consequence the driving force that impels him to stick to his daily task is that of a time server who works just hard enough to hold his job; or, if he is working on a commission, just enough to supply his needs.

The Salesman Who Wants Work Can Find It.—A salesman may occasionally find that there are no more customers on whom he can conveniently call during the working hours of that day. Such is very frequently his position when visiting small country places, when he must often wait over several hours in a town because of inadequate train service. He should remember, however, that his work is not wholly limited to personal interviews. He has frequently to communicate with customers by means of writing. Consequently, the man who makes up his mind that he will be on the job from such an hour in the morning to such an hour in the afternoon, can under all circumstances find useful work of some kind that will profitably occupy his regular working hours.

The Result of Keeping Always at It.—A salesman selling the specialties of a Chicago packing house had only one customer out of a possible three in a small-sized town. He was anxious to open an account with the other two dealers but several calls proved fruitless. After calling on his customer

and visiting the two other prospects without making a sale, he arrived at the station early one afternoon to find that he had just missed the last train out for the day. There was apparently nothing to do for the rest of the day but to return to the hotel and pass the time comfortably smoking in its lobby.

Instead of doing this the salesman went to the nearest telephone booth, picked out the names of a number of residents who lived in the better section of the town, and asked in each case for the lady of the house. To each lady he delivered a short sales talk on the wire. After a few words of introduction and brief mention of the merits of his goods, he asked the housewife where she usually bought her provisions. If she named one of the dealers who was not his customer he suggested that she ask the merchant to stock his specialties so that she might give them a trial—at the same time saying he would be glad to forward samples of anything in which she was interested. In this way he passed several hours ringing up a large number of people, as he knew that among the number there would be a few who would act upon his suggestions. He was requested in several cases to send samples. The final results of this profitable use of his few leisure hours were that when next he called in this town he was able to sell to all three dealers because of the inquiries they had received for certain specialties in his line.

This salesman hated to be sitting idle, drumming his heels in a hotel lobby, or scanning the comic section of the daily paper, just as some so-called salesmen hate the work habit and are on the lookout for any legitimate excuse for avoiding it. With every excuse for loafing, he made profitable use of his time.

One result of acquiring the work habit is that it soon becomes much more interesting and amusing to keep eternally at it than to lounge around and do nothing.

Hints for Developing the Habit of Industry.—To acquire the habit of industry it is important to plan a regular daily routine which must be rigidly adhered to under all circumstances. This routine should first of all consist of regular hours of work. The salesman must be just as conscientious with himself in starting his job at a stated time and sticking to it until quitting time, as if he had to punch a time clock with the knowledge that his time card would come daily to the personal attention of the president of the concern.

As the occupation of the wholesale or the specialty salesman necessitates traveling from place to place and his time is more or less at the mercy of his customers, it is often impossible to map out the work far ahead. He can rarely say to himself, for instance, that he will call on so many customers every day, or that he will sell a certain quantity of goods. In suggesting, therefore, that he should cultivate regular habits of work, the intention is that he should be on the job at a certain hour and refrain from quitting until a certain hour, with the fixed determination to make the best use of this time.

When, however, it is possible to plan the details of the day's work in advance, this should be done. If a man starts out with the intention of working so many hours and sets himself to do certain tasks within these hours, the spirit of competition that is aroused by trying to do a given thing in a given time, tends to make the work more interesting. Interest, as already stated, is the secret of concentration.

The salesman need not worry if he is unable to live up to his plan at once. Habit is a matter of growth which begins slowly and hesitatingly. But a habit that is adhered to grips you in time. The man who cultivates industry a little at a time will, after a while, be unable to be idle. Presently his day's task will be carried out with almost the regularity of a machine, which neither grows tired nor suffers from moods, is neither oversanguine nor depressed.

Tackling the Hardest Jobs First.—The salesman should also make a point, when possible, of tackling the hardest things first in his day's work. If he has an especially disagreeable customer to meet or a delicate interview which he rather dreads, the sooner it is off his mind and done with, the better. If he puts it off until nearly the end of the day, the chances are that he will be looking for excuses to shirk it and procrastinate until the next day. Procrastination is the worst of all foes to the acquirement of the habit of industry. When he tackles the most difficult task at the outset, he is fresh and keen and his enthusiasm is at its maximum point. If, in spite of every effort he fails—well, he knows that the hardest part of the day's work is over. If he succeeds, the very fact of his succeeding where failure might have been expected will exert a stimulating effect upon his enthusiasm throughout the rest of the day.

The Importance of Foot Work.—In what has been said throughout this book, the emphasis has been made upon the importance of brain work. Study, allied with practical experience on the road, is the recipe for the man who wishes to make the most of his opportunities. It must not be forgotten, however, that the daily routine of many salesmen calls for considerable activity. They are constantly on the move from town to town and while in a town or a big city, from place to place. "Foot work," therefore, also counts and in some lines of business it counts for a great deal. A salesman representing a staple wholesale line, whose customers are fairly near together and who does not need to carry samples, can, if he hustles, call on from twenty to thirty customers in a day. Another man of less energy who dislikes locomotion may adopt a more leisurely method and call on only half this number.

The salesman who is enthusiastic in his work and has acquired the habit of industry will waste as little time as pos-

sible in getting about. Given equal ability, the hustler who calls on double the number of customers, will, by the law of averages, reap twice the orders and be of more than double the value of the less energetic man to the firm they both represent. Their cost in salaries and expenses is the same whether they turn in ten or twenty orders a day.

To mention this point as a precept for the salesman to bear in mind, may seem to introduce a trite and obvious subject. But it is well to remember that to walk briskly and eagerly from one place to another tends indirectly to generate enthusiasm and energy. Our thoughts and feelings must find expression in our acts. Conversely, our acts react upon thought and emotion.

Reactions of Industry upon Enthusiasm and Courage.— Two of the most positive mental assets of salesmanship, enthusiasm and courage, are greatly affected for good or for ill by habits of industry. A man may experience a trying and disappointing day or he may not be feeling quite up to the mark. His enthusiasm in consequence is dampened. Under the circumstances he cannot help feeling a trifle discouraged. A man who is mercurial and lacks the work habit will, in consequence, be inclined to shirk his next day's task until he feels more in the mood. The man who works only when he feels like it is pretty sure not to feel in the mood for work on the morning that follows a discouraging day.

The salesman who has acquired the habit of industry will automatically be on his job at his regular hour, regardless of what he did the preceding day. A turn in the wheel of fortune may then bring back with a rush all his old enthusiasm. Enthusiasm is an essential trait of the salesman who tackles his job with the pertinacious courage needed to climb high.

CHAPTER XXVII

THE COURTESY THAT ATTRACTS AND PLEASES

A Salesman's Polish and Finish.—Crudely finished goods, lacking the minute attention to detail, which is always the mark of the master craftsman, may serve the purpose for which they are made as well as the more polished article. Yet if they are sold in competition with goods of superior finish, the more carefully finished article will win out.

Exactly the same rule is applicable to the salesman. A salesman may be enthusiastic and industrious, complete in his knowledge, and efficient in his method of presenting the argument, but his success will be marred if he lacks that fine polish and finish in manner and bearing which is implied by the word "courtesy."

Courtesy is a polish and finish on a man's manners and appearance and his mental qualifications as a whole. If he lacks that softened manner implied by the term and carries on his daily work with the rigidity of a machine, his very efficiency will tend to become offensive and to grate on certain types of people with whom he comes in contact; whereas by tempering the natural aggressiveness of his calling with pleasing behavior and courteous consideration for the feelings of others, he is able to gain his point in many cases where more forceful tactics would fail.

The Aspect of Courtesy Termed "Politeness."—There are two aspects of courtesy. The first we term "politeness"—the more external manners and bearing of the man. The

second aspect is considerateness—thoughtfulness for other people's tastes, interests, and feelings.

Politeness in manners is mainly a matter of care for the little things of bearing, such as removing one's hat upon entering an office, soft manners and speech, little attentions which others do not always expect. This is an aspect of courtesy which can be developed so that it appears at all times and in every interview.

The salesman can begin when he enters the office and asks for information from the girl at the telephone desk. He removes his hat when he addresses her and speaks in a tone of voice which shows at least the deference due to her sex. In this way he wins her liking and respect. The prospective customer may perhaps not be able to see him, or may refuse to see him in spite of several calls. Eventually, however, if his manner and bearing win the liking of the person who stands on guard before the prospect's door, that person will try to secure the salesman an interview. On the other hand, an abrupt, discourteous, dictatorial manner will prejudice those working in a minor capacity. Their influence will then be exerted to hinder his reception by the prospect.

Examples of the Effect of Politeness.—Two wholesale salesmen handling furniture covered the same territory. One was successful while the other trudged along and made hardly an amount sufficient to cover his expenses. Both men were capable and both carried good lines. A study of their methods quickly disclosed the reason for the difference in results.

When the more successful salesman entered a store, he always had a cheery smile for every clerk in the place. His manner to all alike was uniformly polite and genial. The less successful man, who was by nature more shy and diffident, usually ignored employees in a minor capacity; or if he spoke to them at all, he addressed them in an abrupt way. His prac-

tice was to waste no time in greeting but to make his way direct to the buyer's office. A buyer might try both lines, one in competition with the other; but somehow when the goods were sold in this way those of the genial salesman were disposed of more rapidly than those of his competitor. The clerks in the store imagined that the man who refused to recognize them felt himself to be of superior clay, and they resented his unintentional slight. The genial salesman they thought "a mighty fine fellow," and in consequence they lost no opportunity for pushing his goods.

The Politeness of the Good Listener.—Politeness is always revealed in one's manner of talking and listening. When we are listening to a story or when something is explained to us in which we are not interested, it is a mark of politeness to concentrate on what we are told so that the talker does not find that his remarks have been addressed to the air. Many people are quite unconscious of the fact that they are incapable of listening to others because they insist on doing so much of the talking themselves. They seize every opportunity to interrupt the conversation in order to air some opinion that has occurred to them that may or may not be relevant to the subject under discussion.

The salesman who finds his mind wandering while his customer is talking directly to him and who is waiting for an opportunity to make remarks of his own, can be reasonably sure that he lacks the courtesy of concentration, which is an innate mark of the polite listener. Before he can show helpful sympathy with another's viewpoint, he must first listen attentively to what the other fellow has to say.

Attention to Appearance Is Always Worth While.—"Madam, I represent the Pasteur Milk Company," said a house-to-house canvasser as a pert, trim-looking girl opened the door. "I wish to . . ."

"Go rub the mud off your shoes on the grass. Don't stand there dirtying my front doorstep," she said with an air of command.

The salesman meekly obeyed.

"Madam, the milk I . . ."

"Take your hands out of your pockets." He obeys.

"Madam, I have called . . ."

"Never talk to a lady with a cigarette in your mouth."

The cigarette is meekly thrown away.

"Please, ma'am, have you . . ."

"Tuck that dirty handkerchief out of sight. Now I think you are fit to be seen, but you would look better if your shoes were shined, your hat brushed, and your clothes pressed. However, I will now call the lady of the house. I'm the hired girl."

This anecdote illustrates how important are manner and appearance and how many little things go to make up a pleasing whole. Often a detail of which the salesman is unconscious will detract from his personal appearance or so mar his manner that it acts as an irritant upon others. When any of these little things affect the customer unpleasantly, they handicap the salesman in creating that first good impression which is so important if favorable attention is to be given to the offer.

Personal appearance and health enter strongly into the ability to impress others, and appearance is sometimes a much greater factor in salesmanship than the average salesperson realizes. The experienced sales manager when selecting applicants to fill vacant positions will, as a rule, insist first of all that the unknown candidate fulfil certain requisites as to appearance. If the firm he is to represent is of any standing, he must look like a gentleman so far as the care of his person is concerned; his face must be wholesome and show health; his features must show determination and character; and there must be nothing in his bearing, his countenance, or his voice to excite mistrust.

The Effect of Outward Appearance upon Others.—In outward appearance, first in importance come clothes and the details of dress. Clothes do not make a man, but the fact remains that the first impression we create is as much to be attributed to clothes as to manners. Manners and bearing may quickly make us forget a person's clothes; but until he begins to speak he is judged by the general appearance of his attire.

It does not matter if the salesman's clothes are inexpensive and not particularly stylish, but it does matter if they are not in good order and appropriate for business and for the class of men with whom he associates. A man who looks clean and well-groomed in every detail, from the shine on his shoes to the parting of his hair, creates an impression of capability so far as purely outward matters are concerned.

The accessories especially count—shoes, collar, cuffs, handkerchief, hat, finger-nails. Neglect of these matters suggests a careless and slovenly habit of mind. Unconsciously, the man who is careless of his personal appearance will tend to create the impression that he is careless mentally as to the statements he makes. His integrity and his reliability may in consequence, if nothing is known about him, suffer unmerited depreciation in the mind of the customer.

Effect of Dress upon the Salesman Himself.—The consciousness of being well and appropriately dressed has a vital effect upon the man himself. Conversely, the consciousness that something is lacking in one's appearance has a more or less disturbing influence on the mind. When a man looks successful and prosperous he finds it easy to feel and be successful. The mere fact that a salesman presents a shabby and unkempt appearance suggests that he does not find his calling a prosperous one and thus, indirectly, the worth of his goods is depreciated.

The most successful of life insurance salesmen, who during

the past twenty years has written over $8,000,000 worth of insurance policies, says that in his earlier days when he had only one suit of clothes he used to clean and press it himself. When dollars were few and far between, he retained an immaculate crease in his one pair of trousers by placing them every night, before retiring, under a mattress, and before he left home in the morning he rubbed his shoes into a supershine.

The Handicap of Unconscious Mannerisms.—It is almost as important to beware of acquiring any irritating mannerisms, whether of speech, voice, or gesture, as it is to pay attention to dress. Mannerisms more or less irritating are acquired and indulged in quite unconsciously by the complacent person who is not severely self-critical. Such mannerisms may seem of trifling importance, hardly worthy of attention; yet when they irritate the customer or distract attention from the salesman's arguments, they injure business and may suffice to weigh against the sale.

When salesmen meet together in the hotel lobby after the day's work is done, they frequently discuss the various kinds of buyers they have met. When buyers meet in convention, they not infrequently return the compliment by discussing the characteristics of salesmen. Each group might profit by overhearing the other's opinions.

Several buyers who were discussing salesmen and their mannerisms described their pet aversions. "There are several things I dislike to see a salesman do," said one buyer, "but the worst in its irritating effect upon me is the 'hat juggler.' He never knows what to do with his hat. He juggles it first on one knee and then on the other, and he passes it from hand to hand, giving you the impression that he is anxious to finish his sales talk, jam his hat on his head, and bolt.

"Another man has the peculiar habit of rubbing his nose violently every few minutes. While he is talking I am wonder-

ing how it is that the skin does not become sore, or a corn appear in the wrong place.

"Another is continually picking imaginary specks off his clothes. A fourth trims and pares his nails while in my presence—ignorance of good breeding, of course, but none the less offensive. A fifth has a habit of making a little humming sound with his lips. Yet another keeps striking one clenched fist into the open palm of the other hand, and does this for the sake of emphasis forty or fifty times during the interview. The result is he becomes so emphatic that you can hardly trust a word he says."

All these are little things, which in themselves are of trifling importance, and in the ordinary course may affect a salesman's chances of doing business in only a slight degree. But when, as in the case of an indifferent prospective customer who has been hard to approach, they produce an irritating effect and distract the listener's mind from what the salesman is saying, then such mannerisms may be handicapping him in his career to a much greater extent than he imagines.

Crudities of Speech.—There are a number of widely used colloquialisms and crudities of speech which are irritating to the more cultivated. Moreover, a buyer may use certain expressions himself and yet resent as a familiarity their use by a salesman who presumes that these more or less vulgar modes of speech appeal to him. To depart in any way from the correct or accustomed mode of speech implies that we are on a more or less familiar footing with the person addressed. To assume that we are on this footing after a few moments' brief acquaintance is a suggestion which many persons resent.

As mentioned in the chapter on "Diction" (XIII), the phraseology and mode of speech of the salesman must be varied to suit the intelligence revealed by the buyer. In nine cases out of ten the use of slang expressions, provided the salesman's

meaning is intelligible to the listener, might not result in any harm, and can be used with discretion to make his arguments more picturesque and vivid. The salesman, however, should beware lest he fall into the habit of using a few pet slang phrases, as the frequent repetition of these soon becomes intensely irritating.

Crudities of speech are frequently due to habit as to ignorance. It should be remembered, however, that the buyer will very likely attribute any ungrammatical expressions, not to the carelessness of habit, but to stupidity or lack of education. To convey the impression that he lacks education or is deficient in intelligence is not the sort of impression any salesman cares to create.

Examples of Mannerisms in Speech.—Some people have a habit of beginning every second or third sentence with the word "now," quite unconscious of its irritating monotony. Imagine a salesman talking in this way: "Now, let me tell you about our service. Now, I know you will agree with me. Now, notice how well this is finished," and so on endlessly. The word "now" is a useful one in its place, but repeated in this manner it becomes irritating to critical ears.

Another unfortunate manner of speech, which many salesmen unconsciously fall into, is that of emphasizing every query or assertion with an additional and wholly unnecessary query. "Do you see?," "Isn't that so?," "See what I mean?," which they affix to every phrase whether put in the form of a query or not.

A common crudity is to interrogate, when one fails to understand or to hear, by means of a grunt and a rather irritated expression of countenance instead of by courteously saying, "Pardon me, I did not hear," "I beg your pardon," or a similar polite remark. This form of interrogation has a jarring effect upon a person of any breeding, quite sufficient

in some cases to disturb the mental poise of the listener and render him incapable of giving the salesman a patient hearing.

Control of the Voice.—The tone of the voice, the loudness and rate of talking, the clearness with which a man speaks—all contribute to a favorable or unfavorable impression of the salesman's personality. Some men always talk noisily, even in a quiet room, or in a strident tone which irritates the ear as a glaring light the eye. Others talk too volubly, so that the listener is annoyed by the flood of words; others too slowly, trying to emphasize everything, so that the busy man who thinks rapidly and to the point soon grows tired of listening to the measure elaboration of their arguments.

When a man talks in a modulated, pleasant, and easy tone, which is loud enough to be distinctly heard but is not noisy, he makes it easy and pleasant for the prospective customer to listen to him, and also leaves himself an opportunity to be emphatic by raising his voice to accentuate the striking points of his sales argument. The most attractive features of the proposition can be accentuated in this way with the object of concentrating the customer's attention upon them.

The Eradication of Unconscious Mannerisms.—What is true of speech is true also of awkwardness of posture or of nervous movements of the face, hands, or feet. Such mannerisms as tapping with the fingers, stroking one's hair, tilting back one's chair, even coughing or clearing the throat—while they may not have an irritating effect upon nine people out of ten, will jar seriously upon the tenth. All these automatic motions are vents for unutilized nervous energy. They indicate that the salesman has failed to bring his own nervous system under the control of his will. Yet any and all of these indications of misapplied nervous energy can be completely controlled by the will if a sustained effort is made to eradicate

them. One can learn to avoid errors in grammar and pronunciation, irritating gestures and mannerisms; one can learn to speak distinctly and in a pleasing tone as certainly as one can learn and acquire polite table manners.

The salesman who realizes the importance of these little details and wishes to be sure that he is free from anything which is irritating or a cause of reproach to himself, should watch himself at all times—not merely when talking to the customer, but in all circumstances and places. He must study the subject in his leisure moments and he must ask for advice and criticism from friends. When he ascertains his own weaknesses, in this respect he will have little difficulty in effecting the necessary cure.

The eradication of disagreeable mannerisms and the acquirement of pleasing manners are the sure results of patient effort. When once the right habit is developed, it remains and is unconsciously practiced at all times.

Courtesy or Consideration for Other People.—The development of resolute and persistent habits of industry allied with enthusiasm for his work may often lead the salesman to overplay his hand. He pushes too hard and tends to become domineering in his aggressiveness. Most people like to make up their own minds, or to think they make up their own minds, and they dislike to feel that in any way they are driven or hurried.

It is true that in some cases the salesman must urge, and even drive, an irresolute customer to a decision. But the very fact that he is sometimes successful in doing this tends to make his manner so aggressive that it causes offense in other instances—unless it is leavened with courtesy.

These remarks are particularly applicable to the buyer who is readily influenced when he thinks that the salesman has his interests in mind. If such customers imagine that they are

being driven or urged toward a certain course by a salesman's insistence or mere will power, their resistance tends to stiffen and they draw back. If they think that he is considerate and disposed to meet them half-way, they are prepared to meet him at the same point. Therefore, the habit of looking at the offer from the customer's point of view and admitting any general disadvantages that it may possess, is one method of cultivating courtesy. The salesman thus indicates that he is sensitive to the feelings and interests of others, and this is the fine flower of courtesy.

Aggressiveness Should be Tempered with Courtesy.—A point to bear in mind is that a man who has only tireless habits of industry to recommend him and who uses his faculties in an aggressive way, without the leaven of courteous consideration for others, *is not liked.* Not all his customers may be actually offended by a purely business manner which thinks only of self-interest and leaves courtesy out of consideration, but some certainly are offended. Moreover, none of them *enjoy* his visits. Such a man finds it difficult to win the friendliness of his customers, and, as we have seen, the salesman who fails to do this, is a comparative failure.

In former days salesmen sought to create this feeling of trust and friendliness by striving for the reputation of "good fellows." They collected a large stock of funny stories, they adopted a uniform manner of joviality, and they were ready to be convivial when opportunity offered. Methods like these are out of date. Today the old-fashioned convivial and jovial manner is replaced by courteous but businesslike efficiency.

Discourtesy Should Never be Imitated.—Discourtesy in others should never be made an excuse or reason for discourtesy in ourselves. The salesman who never forgets his manners and is equally polite in every trying circumstance always re-

ceives his reward if only in the salutary effects of the self-control he has exercised.

A young ticket seller stood inside his office window at a theater while a line of people stood outside. A woman pushed her way to the box office and protested angrily because of the poor seats she had been given.

"I am very sorry," replied the youth, "but they are the best I have left."

"I don't believe you," was the reply in a tone that all could hear. "There are plenty of vacant seats left."

"Those are all sold, Madam," he replied in a perfectly courteous tone, "but as they are reserved they will not be occupied until the performance begins. I am sorry to disappoint you."

Many a man would have become angry and made a sharp, impatient reply in view of the fact that the complaining woman was holding up a long line of people who were waiting to buy seats. The effect of this restraint and uniform courtesy was that a man standing in line presented his card and asked the ticket seller to call on him next day. The name proved to be that of a large retailing house. When the young man called the merchant said:

"A man who can keep his temper as you can keep yours is wasting his time selling theater tickets. You will find a much bigger field in my store. What's your present job worth?" On hearing the sum he offered the youth an opening in his complaint department at an increase over the theater salary.

The Acquirement of Courteous Manners.—To cultivate courteous manners and a polite bearing is not a difficult matter. First in importance is to feel kindly disposed toward others and to seek opportunities to help them or to do something which ordinarily would not be expected. For example, to hold open

the door for a lady is a courtesy which some men never think of offering, simply because they have never practiced it. The courteous retail salesman promptly places a chair for a tired-looking customer before he begins to serve her. After such things as these have been done several times, they quickly become matters of habit.

Again, one can make a special effort to remember names and faces. When the salesman enters a retail store, he can seize the opportunity to address by name any of the employees he may encounter with a genial query as to what they have been doing lately, or what has happened in the town since his last visit. Little attentions of this sort all serve to impress others with one's pleasing manners and uniform courtesy.

How readily courteous manners can be cultivated, will be realized when we reflect what a simple matter it is to use the words "Thank you," and how frequently this simple matter is neglected. These two words, if spoken in a tone of real sincerity and with a pleasant smile, will have much greater weight in influencing a retail shopper to return to the store than the average salesperson believes. We all like to feel that our patronage is appreciated, and that the salesperson who has waited upon us has been pleased to do so and will be pleased to see us again. In the opinion of a prominent merchant, only one salesman in ten says, "Thank you," after every sale; and not one salesman in twenty knows how to say it effectively. The salesman who ignores this rule in any of the numerous stores of a well-known tobacco company may expect dismissal at any time.

How much the mention of these two little words, "Thank you," reacts upon the bearing of the salesman, it is impossible to say. But the mere fact that one expresses one's appreciation and one's thanks before the customer leaves, results in the striking of a pleasant note at the moment when the inter-

view is terminated and thus leaves a pleasing impression in both minds.

Courtesy Part of the Salesman's Stock-in-Trade.—Buying is a serious business. It involves an outlay to which a certain element of risk is attached. It also entails the exercise of judgment in which mistakes can easily be made. In consequence the responsibilities which fall upon the buyer are such that they frequently perplex and harass him. This fact may react on his mood and make him irritable. Therefore, the task of the buyer should be made as easy and pleasant as possible.

When in the presence of a harassed and irritable buyer the salesman may need to assume a courteous attitude even though beneath the surface, he feels intensely irritated. The assumption of this courtesy is not hypocrisy but self-control. There is no more business or moral objection to it than there is to the polish or the veneer with which the face of furniture is finished. True, deeply felt courtesy may be impossible unless it is reciprocated. The buyer may be morose to the verge of being disagreeable. In such a case the salesman must force himself to be polite in his manner and courteous in his bearing, however much it may go against the grain. Courtesy is part of his stock-in-trade that he must carry with him; he should show it just as he displays his samples. Buyers expect to be treated courteously by right of the position they hold. The maintenance of a courteous bearing under circumstances which demand an effort of will is a means of developing the imperturbable self-control which is the mark of fine manners and good breeding.

Courtesy and politeness are the sunshine of business. The sun shines not only on the surface; its warmth goes much deeper. While illuminating the outside of the man it warms the inside as well.

CHAPTER XXVIII

THE FIRE OF COURAGE

Courage and Tact.—Two qualities have been constantly mentioned and as constantly implied throughout this book—courage and tact. To some extent they are antagonistic to each other. The man who is supremely tactful is rarely outstandingly courageous and vice versa.

The man who is inherently courageous often suffers from the defects of this essential quality in that his aggressiveness tends to make him less adaptable to the feelings and the point of view of others. Conversely, the man who is naturally sensitive of others' feelings often lacks the driving power of the aggressive and forceful personality. The perfect salesman, if there were such a being, would blend these two fine qualities in equal proportion. Taken together they imply the essential qualities of a successful salesman so far as the development of personality is concerned.

The First Aspect of Courage.—Courage has two aspects—daring and endurance. Both are needed by the salesman and both can be developed. Daring is that kind of courage frequently referred to as "nerve." The man who is equipped with this variety is ready to face a difficult prospect whom a less intrepid salesman would rather avoid. He is eager to tackle big things and is not content to handle the small customer or the easy trade.

Nerve is a faculty possessed in some degree by every business man who stands out among his competitors as more than

commonly successful. His success is in part due to an innate ability to think over a situation coolly and decide on the best course to adopt despite all risks or dangers. The daring salesman who possesses nerve never allows himself to be deterred from tackling a problem in which the solution of the difficulty demands courage. He knows he possesses the faculty of thinking coolly yet quickly; therefore he rather courts the situation in which this quality will enable him to succeed where the average man would probably fail.

Never alone, however, unless fortified with personal attractiveness, knowledge, study, and training, will not carry a man very far. Nerve degenerates into bumptiousness and irritating presumption, or even impudence, unless it is supported by the more tangible and definite qualities acquired by study and discipline. But the nerve that is fortified with knowledge and practice of the art of presenting an offer in its most attractive way will carry the salesman far.

The Second Aspect of Courage.—The second aspect of courage is shown in that fine trait that we designate as "persistence." The man who possesses or develops this enduring courage never knows when he is beaten. He persists in spite of failure. In fact, failure acts merely as a spur to further effort.

Every salesman expects failure from time to time. It is part of his day's work. By the law of averages a certain number of customers will not be in good humor, others will be too busy, others will have just bought what he has to sell, and others will refuse flatly to see any salesman about anything unless an appointment is made. By the same law of averages, however, some customers will be in need of the commodity he offers just at the time of his call, others will be open to conviction that it is the thing they need, and others again will make a practice of interviewing every salesman who calls because

they know that the information frequently obtained by this means makes it well worth their while to do so. Thus the tenacious salesman who has courage that endures goes on his way despite rebuffs and discouragements of every kind. As with the development of a muscle, the practice of persistence leads to the strengthening of the will to succeed in proportion to the resistance experienced.

Where Quiet Persistence Made Good.—The old adage of the tortoise and the hare holds good when applied to the salesman. The man who "keeps plugging away" and is never daunted by any number of "turndowns" will as a rule come out on top, where the more brilliant man who may be more easily discouraged will fail. Of all mental attributes perhaps the courage of persistence is the most valuable.

The purchasing agent of a large railroad in writing about salesmen he has met, says:

"I recall one man who won my admiration and later my orders for being a plugger. His first call was to introduce himself and his house and he did not directly ask for business. On a later call he told me what he could furnish and asked for an opportunity to serve me. At the time I was bound by contracts made by my predecessor and my superiors. He called regularly at discreet intervals and was in no way overanxious, but stated that he was ready to do business. He did not resent a contract which deprived him of a chance to sell. He plugged along and was so pleasant and patient that I came to admire his perseverance.

"In time he had an opportunity to bid on a very large job which we had going through. He handled a type of specialty which was also made by four other companies, and the five companies were to submit samples. The plugger lost out, but he was a graceful loser and smilingly declared he hoped to do better next time. No hint did he make of unfairness, and in

fact he went so far as to say that the make I selected was all right. He has now made good. It was later my pleasure to give him a substantial portion of our business in his line, and, needless to say, his prices were right and his service as faultless as his manners."

The Specialty Salesman Must be Persistent.—The present-day manager of an important insurance company states that when he began to work for the company his commissions during the first three months amounted to exactly $10. Before he started out to solicit he firmly made up his mind that even if he earned nothing at all for three months he would still persist, and that he would force himself to talk life insurance at every opportunity until he acquired the art of broaching the subject with ease.

At first he felt timid and nervous when approaching a prospect. Yet he realized that though he was not making sales, he was learning quite a lot about meeting objections, handling different types of customers, and gaining that courage which is so necessary for effective work in this form of salesmanship. He did not get discouraged, nor did he throw up his job after a week's trial, declaring that he could not sell life insurance because it was the hardest thing on earth to sell; still less did he attribute his failure to the fact that no one wanted to buy insurance in his particular town because of bad trade, hard times, or what-not. He just persistently stuck to his job, interviewing everyone who would listen to him regardless of who they were.

A year later this same young man who earned only $10 during the first three months because of his timidity and his lack of confidence, was drawing $100 a week. The diffidence and fear with which he approached prospects in his early days was now replaced by a quiet readiness to tackle the hardest of prospects.

The Cause and Control of Fear.—There is hardly a beginner who does not experience a feeling of nervous dread or tremor of fear when he calls upon his first prospects. We all dread the unfamiliar and the unknown. The salesman suffering from this painful sensation in his solar plexus is at a great disadvantage when he approaches a customer. His manner shows plainly that he lacks confidence in himself and in his offer; and to the extent that his fear is apparent he tends to arouse distrust in the mind of the buyer.

The obvious remedy for lack of courage is to create such a feeling of confidence in one's ability to sell and to meet every kind of objection that this confidence ousts all fear. Therefore the timorous salesman when he approaches his first prospect in fear and trembling must remember that his emotion is simply due to his lack of experience. After the first few calls, and especially after the first sale, he will begin to feel confidence in his ability to handle a customer; and in measure as he handles a number of customers successfully so will all fear vanish.

Adequate Preparation the First Essential.—The more the salesman drills himself in the presentation of his talking points and in the use of appropriate answers to objections that are likely to be raised, the more confidence will he feel in his ability to handle any situation and the more courageously will he approach even the most churlish of buyers. It will help him in his approach if he remembers that a prospect, no matter how important or of how peppery a type, is after all only a human being like himself. Furthermore, to sell goods as he himself is now doing is the daily task of thousands the world over. He is not asking a favor or seeking to sell something which is not required. He is approaching a possible customer who, when the salesman's offer is thoroughly understood, will in the ordinary course of events be glad to take advantage of it.

The Importance of the First Sale.—A salesman tells the following story about his first sale:

"During a good breakfast while I sized up my proposition, mentally, rehearsed my sales talk, and thought of the unanswerable nature of my arguments, I felt courageous and eager to approach my first prospect. Breakfast over, I took a street car to the business section where I was going to start operations. When I got off the car I felt surprised to see the building in which my first prospect was to be found loom up in front of me. I began to have qualms of fear.

"To think the matter over once again I walked around the building. The comforting thought then came to my mind—'Well, after all the prospect may not be in his office.' By this time I began to feel mad with myself. Then I gripped myself by the back of my collar and hustled myself along to the prospect's door.

"I asked the girl at the information desk for Mr. Smith, hoping that he would not be in. When she asked for my card I felt bad. When she returned in a few minutes to say that if I would wait Mr. Smith would see me in a few minutes, I felt better. While waiting I went over my opening statement half a dozen times and impressed upon myself the importance of entering with a smile, of being deliberate, and of speaking more slowly than usual.

"My first customer happened to be a genial type of fellow. He greeted me with a handshake and asked me to take a seat. I managed to open my interview, I believe, without any trace of fear and three minutes later I had completely forgotten that there was anything at all to be afraid of in the enthusiasm aroused in my mind by my sales talk. The prospect raised several objections that I was primed to meet and that I simply swept aside. This gave me such confidence that half an hour later I left that office with an order in my pocket.

"I am glad to say that this was my first and last ex-

perience of feeling afraid when approaching a prospect."

As in the case of this salesman, lack of courage is as a rule due to diffidence and fear that the sales arguments will prove unavailing. But if the salesman has memorized several forms of opening statements all designed to arouse attention; if he remembers as he enters a prospect's presence to smile and to control the muscles of his face; if he takes pains to speak slowly and deliberately, knowing exactly what he is going to say, what points he is going to make, and in what order, then all fear and diffidence will quickly vanish. A few attempts will enable him to acquire that confidence which is essential in leading to a successful sale.

Truth of Statement Gives Courage.—The nervous and diffident salesman will find it far easier to acquire courage when he enthusiastically believes in the absolute truth of every statement he makes. Enthusiasm, as already emphasized, is based on confidence. Confidence alone gives courage. If the salesman thinks that he is handling an inferior line of goods or that it is necessary for him to make statements which are untrue in order to make a sale, he would be well advised to seek another connection.

There are any number of large firms whose products are the equal of any of their kind that are constantly on the lookout for capable salesmen. No capable man need represent a firm manufacturing goods of an inferior quality or a house whose methods of business will not stand the strictest investigation. Before the salesman starts out on his morning round he must be able mentally to convince himself that his product has certain advantages which make it at least equal to anything else on the market. In other words, he must *sell himself* before he begins his day's work of selling to others—otherwise he will lack the enthusiasm which is like a forced draft to the fire of courage.

The Effect of Untruth on the Repeat Order.—The importance of absolute truth and honesty of statement will be realized if the salesman remembers that any mistatement will react unfavorably upon him when he makes a second call on the same customer. If the first sale is made by means of misrepresentation, courage will certainly be lacking when the time comes to face a customer with a view to a repeat order. Many a salesman is led to misrepresent goods in his eagerness to make a sale. If a sale cannot be made by honest statements and honest principles, it is far better not made.

The fellow with a glib tongue and pleasing address, who makes a good first impression and then talks the prospect into buying by means of misrepresentation, cannot return year in and year out to the same clients. The spell of his personality vanishes before the fact of the inferiority of his goods. Such a salesman never has the courage to meet the customer twice. On the other hand, the salesman who tells the truth and nothing but the truth about his goods, even at the risk of losing an order, so inspires confidence that he is welcomed and given such business as can be profitably granted him.

Every business thrives on the repeat order and there is nothing that will make repeat orders more difficult to secure than misrepresentation or exaggerated description which deceives the customer as to the merits and qualities of the goods. To sell by deceiving the customer is suicidal for the salesman and, worse still, for his employer.

Aim at Big Game, but Don't Forget the Small.—The salesman who honestly believes in the merits of his wares and who also takes pride in the thought that he is equipped to meet every type of buyer, will find that his courage increases in proportion as he aims at big game. It is human nature to prefer to tackle the man who is easily approached because of the relative unimportance of his business and to think that a num-

ber of small orders are just as good as a single large order. The courageous salesman, however, does not deceive himself with this form of reasoning. The larger his orders the more valuable he becomes to his house. The bigger the way in which a prospect carries on business the better for his firm. The big customer may be a little more difficult to approach than the small man; the salesman may have to make several calls before he finds him unoccupied and willing to grant an interview; but when once in his presence the chance of making a sale is just as great if not greater than when smaller game is tackled.

Most business houses confine the work of their junior salesmen to their less important customers, while the bigger game are left to the care of men who have had years of experience on the road. The young salesman may by means of training in the factory know just as much about the goods as the older man. But years of experience on the road have given the older man that confidence in his ability to handle any situation and meet any type of customer which works out in courage. The young salesman will most quickly acquire this courage by using every opportunity to aim at big game.

This does not mean that the small is to be ignored or despised; not only in learning the art of salesmanship but all through one's career the small men deserve attention and respect. Further, the man who confines himself to big buyers may not actually earn as much as one who takes a number of small orders. The big fellows were small once, and today's small ones will be tomorrow's big ones.

The Discipline of Facing Disagreeable Prospects.— The salesman also develops his courage when he forces himself to interview a man whom he knows to be a disagreeable prospect and whom in consequence he would rather avoid. This is a form of self-discipline which will react on the salesman in many favorable ways. To tackle one buyer who is

difficult to approach and known to be a grouch and then sell to him, has a better effect upon the salesman's courage than a score of successes gained without the overcoming of any serious obstacles. If he is successful in such an interview, the success will make it easier for him when the time comes to face another difficult customer. If he fails, the failure after all is part of his day's work and the mere fact that he has tackled a formidable prospect and come out unscathed will stiffen his courage for subsequent interviews.

A salesman selling advertising for a well-known periodical was about to make his first call on a customer. Among the list of prospects handed to him was the name of one with a reputation for hectoring and bullying. He had formerly advertised with the magazine, but for reasons which he would not definitely state he had discontinued his advertisements. When salesmen from the periodical called on him he frequently received them, but merely to give them, with undue emphasis and sarcasm, his opinion as to the futility of advertising in general and the advertising of their magazine in particular.

Despite the warnings of his fellow salesmen, the novice determined to approach his worst customer first. Though he entered Mr. Blank's presence with his heart thumping somewhere near his shoes, his opening greeting was as follows:

"Mr. Blank, half the men in our office are scared to face you and I have heard all about your methods of turning us down. I know that you don't believe in advertising and that you say you will never advertise in our magazine again. So I have come here this morning to try and find out what actually are your objections. I don't expect you to sign a contract for a dozen pages or for even one page, but I do expect and hope you will teach me something. If I can learn how to meet your objections I expect I can deal with almost anybody else. If I cannot meet them, it will have been a good experience for me to have faced you, so now go ahead."

The blustering manner of Mr. Blank changed before the cheerfulness of this frank and open approach.

"My only objection to your publication was that I advertised in it and it didn't bring results. Therefore, whenever one of your men called, asking me to renew my contract, I thought of the money I had wasted in your publication and this made me angry."

"I appreciate your point of view, Mr. Blank," replied the salesman. "Some of our advertisers who have contracted for space year by year were at first disappointed with their results. You know as a business man that it is impossible for any publication to guarantee to produce customers. All that it can do is to guarantee its circulation and offer the best service possible to produce the desired effect. Now, I can't guarantee results. But what I would like to do is to have the opportunity of mapping out a new plan of campaign which I believe will appeal to you better than the last. Then, if you agree that it looks more attractive and has more possibilities in it, you may like to try it out. But I won't ask you to consider anything until I can show you something that will interest you and that you will believe is worth a trial."

When the young salesman left he was without his order, but he had a promise from his client to reconsider his decision if the new series of advertisements which were to be drawn up met with his approval. In addition to this promise the salesman left with much greater confidence in his ability to meet any situation that might call for courage.

The Self-Discipline of Courage Produces Initiative.—The salesman who tries to develop courage and endurance will find that insensibly he begins to reveal the desirable characteristic of initiative. All men who achieve something out of the ordinary possess this trait in a high degree. Their incomes, if they are salesmen or follow a commercial pursuit, are larger—often much larger—than the incomes of those who lack the

ability to lead. Their striking success is not wholly due to their honesty or to their loyalty, although both of these traits count heavily. They forge ahead of others because their initiative impels them to do a great deal more than they are told to do and more than is a regular part of their duty.

Everybody can do what he is told to do, obey orders. Only a minority display initiative and do more than is expected of them. The salesman can begin by manifesting initiatives in little things. First of all, he becomes more familiar with the goods which he sells and with the business in general than he is required to be. He uses his spare time to familiarize himself not only with ordinary conditions, but with everything pertaining to the business inside and out. This preparatory work equips him to seize opportunities that otherwise he would miss and then his courage impels him to grasp them and improve upon them.

Example of Initiative.—A traveling salesman representing a flour manufacturer visited a town in the Middle West which had just experienced a flood. Hundreds of families were homeless and without resources. The salesman's business was largely with one buyer, a grocer, whose premises had been completely swept away. The man had formerly been a good customer of the firm and prompt in his payments, but such was the loss that he had incurred and so serious seemed to be the inevitable interruption to his trade that ruin stared him in the face. When the salesman called on the dealer he found him in the depths of despondency and with no suggestions to make as to the rebuilding of his vanished business.

Without waiting to consult his house the salesman first of all promised a big extension of credit. He then offered on his own responsibility and on behalf of his firm to donate a quantity of flour for the relief of the inhabitants if the grocer would consult with other business men of the community and form a relief committee. He procured from the grocer a list

of the firms which had been supplying him with other lines of his stock, and to each he sent a wire briefly stating the nature of the disaster and asking both for contributions and for an extension of credit. As the floods in question had aroused the sympathetic patriotism of the nation, these requests were promptly acceded to. The salesman spent over $100 in telegrams, but before his day's work was completed he had secured over $5,000 in promises of help for the town, and extensions of credit for the dealer which made it possible for him to build up a new business and look the future in the face.

When the members of the firm heard of the measures their salesman had taken, he received their hearty commendation. The house trusted the judgment of its representative, it felt proud of the initiative he had revealed, and his action was approved of in every way.

Initiative of this kind, which was founded on the courage of facing a disastrous situation with vigorous promptitude, resulted in material advantage to the community, in the rebuilding of the retailer's business, and in the enhancement of the salesman's prestige as a man of resource and strong character.

Exercising Initiative Develops Judgment.—Judgment presupposes the ability to weigh up the advantages for and against a proposition and then decide as to the best course to pursue. It is obvious that before judgment can be revealed a course of action must be decided upon. Judgment is therefore the necessary corollary to initiative. If we first manifest the courage of initiative and then profit by our mistakes, insensibly the powers of judgment are developed. The timorous man who is excessively cautious when an opportunity presents itself to display initiative and to exercise his judgment discloses the weakness of procrastination. His caution needs to be fortified by courage if he is to stand forth as a man of sound judgment.

CHAPTER XXIX

THE LUBRICANT OF TACT

Definition of Tact.—Tact is the complement of courage and is the final requisite for rounding out the forceful personality. Tact is the intellectual quality as courage is the moral quality of the successful salesman. It is the lubricant which takes the creaks and jars and the dangers of friction out of the critical situation. The tactless salesman will find that sand has a way of eating into the bearings of his point of contact with the customer. His enthusiasm may be working at high pressure under a full head of steam; his courage may give him immense driving power; his sales talk may form a perfect piece of mechanism; but if he lacks tact his work will fail—just as a piece of machinery, however carefully put together, fails to act without lubrication. Or if it works at all it will be painfully, with much creaking and groaning.

Tact is that mental alertness which enables us to say and do what is best under the circumstances. Every chapter in this work has been more or less a lesson in tact. When an appeal is made to the right buying motive, tact is shown in the adaption of the selling talk to the mental attitude of the buyer. When manner and method are varied to suit a buyer of peculiar temperament, the same tact is displayed. Tact implies patience, cheerfulness, courtesy, gracious acceptance of an inevitable situation, close observation, the power of quick decision as to the best thing to do or to say, and every mental quality which conduces to the harmony of an interview. In its essence it is the ability to sense the thoughts, feelings, or emotions of others so that nothing in word or deed antagonizes.

Tact Is Revealed in Little Things.—Tact is so all-pervading and yet so intangible in its nature that it can be shown in many unobtrusive ways. The most obvious is to refrain from doing or saying anything which will hurt the feelings of others and to do everything to put others at their ease. Many people are deficient in tact because they have not the imagination to realize how their thoughtless remarks or unconsidered acts hurt more sensitive natures. One must intuitively sympathize with another person's weaknesses or deficiencies to be really tactful. A critical or contemptuous attitude of mind kills the sympathy of understanding.

A lady entered a millinery store to buy a hat. In comparison with her height her head was unusually large and she seemed to be sensitive at the thought of drawing attention to what in her mind seemed a physical defect. Half apologetically she said to the saleswoman:

"I don't know whether or not you can fit me because my head is so large. I always have a dreadful time finding something I can wear."

The quick-witted saleswoman at once brought out a hat that was too large for the customer, saying, "We have many customers who need hats rather larger than the usual size and this is by no means our largest. Will you try this one on, Madam?"

The tactful action and these few words sufficed not only to relieve the customer of her embarrassment but to free her mind from the impression that the size of her head was in any way abnormal. The saleswoman possessed that intuitive sympathy which enabled her to place herself in the position of another person.

The Tactful Salesman Is Never Contentious.—The tactful salesman cultivates the art of saying a difficult or contradictory thing in a pleasing way which cannot cause offense

As much as possible he avoids topics which lead to contention. When opposition is unavoidable, under no circumstance does he ever betray any irritability in voice or manner, or indicate that he is finding it difficult to keep his temper under control.

Tact enables the salesman to tell when it is necessary to humor a customer's prejudice or to concede the truth of certain arguments which in some way minimize the value of the offer. Such concessions often inspire far more confidence than contradictory statements, however well reasoned. The tactful salesman is always willing to concede non-essentials, if by so doing he can accentuate the importance of vital things.

Tact Essential in Breaking Down Prejudice.—The irritable, domineering type of buyer is frequently unreasonable in his prejudice. Only a salesman of consummate tact, who is sensitive to every mood, is competent to deal with the person who shows a marked prejudice out of mere contrariness.

A dealer who had been bombarded with descriptive literature of an adding machine became irritated. He believed he had no use for the device; he resented in his own mind the fact that his desk was littered with circulars that he thought were of no interest and that in consequence promptly found their way into the waste basket.

When the adding machine salesman called, the prospect's greeting ran: "I am not interested in your machine. Be good enough to tell your mailing department not to pester me any more with their circulars. I have no use for such a device." He was too much of a gentleman to say, "And now get out," but his manner implied it.

The salesman realized that if his offer was to be given impartial consideration he must jump right into his proposition. Argumentative assertion must at all costs be avoided and a tactful appeal made to the customer's self-interest in his opening sentence.

"Mr. Jones," he said, smilingly and in a suave voice which compelled attention, "you would appreciate the value of a pencil that would write down any sum of figures you wanted it to write and would then add them up of its own accord, would you not?"

The irritable prospect consented grudgingly that such a pencil as described by the salesman would be a useful tool for any office desk.

"Well," replied the salesman with the enthusiasm of manner that rarely fails to awaken interest, "that is just what my machine will do for you. But it will not only add with absolute accuracy; it will divide, it will subtract, and it will even multiply. In fact it will do in an hour as much work for you, and much more accurate work, than any clerk can do in a day. It saves its cost in wages alone within a year. It makes possible the compiling of statements that you will find invaluable in managing your business. Let me show you not one or a half a dozen, but a score of different ways in which you will find the device useful. Just give me five minutes and I'll convince you that my machine will pay for its cost ten times over."

As in this example, the tactful salesman never recognizes irritation in others by answering a petulant argument with an open contradiction. On the contrary, he tries indirectly to refute the weakness or unreasonableness of his prospect's opposition.

Tact Senses Hopeless Antagonism.—Certain natures are instinctively antagonistic and any effort to bridge the gulf, however tactfully made, leaves a feeling of constraint. The tactful salesman can always sense when his personality jars on another. In such circumstances he keeps himself in the background as much as possible and makes no attempt to place the interview upon a footing of geniality. Instead, every effort is bent on switching the mind of the prospect from the sales-

man's personality and his appearance to the sales talk and the goods. He at once plunges into his argument; if he has any samples he displays them as quickly as possible; and he eliminates the "I" and his own views and opinions from the conversation. In so far as he succeeds in transferring the situation of the buyer from himself to his goods, the interview progresses favorably.

Many salesmen make the mistake of trying to thaw or to warm up the man who is cold and refuses to be genial. When the customer's unwilling mood is tactlessly ignored and an attempt is made to thrust the salesman's personality forward, any possible chance of making a sale vanishes.

Tact Recognizes the Hopeless Prospect.—Occasionally the salesman's visit will be found to be inopportune. There is a right time and a wrong time for any interview and the tactful salesman never wastes his own and his customer's time by insisting upon talking at the wrong moment.

A dealer, for example, may be waiting upon customers; a buyer may be dictating to his stenographer or preparing to leave the office; or an accumulation of papers on the desk may indicate that the business man is more anxious to get on with his work than he is to listen to the salesman. Under these circumstances the tactful salesman quickly sums up the situation and decides whether it is better to wait until he can have the undivided attention of the prospect or to ask for another appointment and then withdraw.

After the interview begins the tactful salesman feels whether or not his talk is convincing. He quickly recognizes when he is in the presence of a stubborn, obstinate type of person who has firmly decided not to allow the argument to influence him in his determination not to buy. Under these circumstances he does not blindly and pertinaciously continue his argument; he comes straight to the point by asking whether

it is a waste of time for him to continue his sales talk. But he does this apparently tactless thing with such tactful sincerity and openness that the customer instead of being offended is rather disarmed. In many cases tact of this kind dissolves antagonism and transforms a man who has obstinately determined not to be convinced into a reasonable human being who is willing to give a fair hearing to the proposition.

Tact in Its Negative Aspect.—As the whole purpose of this book is more or less a study of the art of manifesting tact, the subject may be concluded with a brief summary of the negative aspect of tact.

Mere obsequiousness is not tact. Flattery is not tact. To try always to please and ingratiate oneself is not necessarily tact. Success in salesmanship implies the ability to make people do what the salesman wants them to do. Often he finds he is faced with strong opposition that calls for all his fighting qualities. But because these very fighting qualities are used discreetly, he does not lose the respect of his opponent, but on the contrary wins admiration and frequently liking.

Tact does not always imply stating the plain and unvarnished truth, yet the man who lies has no tact. Tact does not always entail an absolutely accurate description; yet the man who exaggerates lacks tact. In short, this essential qualification of tact implies the ability to look through the eyes of the listener; to tell him what he would like to know so far as truth permits; to sympathize with him in his mental attitude; to weigh up the advantages, for and against, of seeking to lead the customer either by reason or persuasion or of driving him by the strength of personality—and to act accordingly. This summarizes the whole art of tactful salesmanship.

Business Ethics.—When all is said and done, to be tactful is to be a gentleman, and to be a gentleman is to be a man

of honor, one who does nothing that can hurt and everything that can help those with whom he is associated.

Civilization is constructive, its purpose is the betterment of life in material, intellectual, and moral conditions. The salesman is one of the most potent forces of the modern world in furthering this work of improving the material and intellectual well-being of the community. Every electric iron that is sold, every encyclopedia that is purchased, every sale of a commodity that represents true value, in an atom of energy exerted toward the advancement of individual and public welfare.

The moral influence of the salesman is as great and as important as his material and intellectual power. By deceit or trickery or exaggeration he can destroy fellowship and all that civilization is striving to build up. By helpful and straight-forward advice and counsel he can construct a valuable share of the great edifice of the world brotherhood. Each sale he makes can contribute to the customer's faith, confidence, and reliance in the world about him.

There is an old story of three men at work in the quarry. On being asked what they were doing, the first replied, "I am making $5 a day"; the second, "I am cutting stone"; but the third, "I am building a Temple to the Spirit of Freedom."

APPENDIX A

QUESTIONS AND PROBLEMS

CHAPTER I—The Study and Practice of the Art of Salesmanship

1. If you are a salesman, answer the following questions about your offering. (If you are not a salesman, answer all you can about any common article.)

(a) Where is it made?
(b) What is it made of?
(c) Why is it made of that material?
(d) How long will it last?
(e) Why will it last so long?
(f) Why is it better than others?
(g) What will it do?
(h) Who can use it?
(i) Where can you find prospects?
(j) How can you sell more?
(k) What does it cost per unit to sell?
(l) How does your selling expense compare with other salesmen's expenses?

2. In fifty words, present a persuasive reason why a prospect should buy:

(a) A low-priced automobile.
(b) A high-priced automobile.
(c) A radio set.
(d) A hair net.
(e) An oriental rug.
(f) A pocket flashlight.
(g) Some other article which you are selling or in which you are interested.

3. An ill-tempered, quick-acting buyer has been insisting on having special concessions as to terms. The salesman must tell him that his request is unreasonable and cannot be granted. How can he do this tactfully:—use the words you would use in such a case.

4. Illustrate the use of courage in selling goods.

5. As a test of imagination, describe how you would go about locating prospects for:

(a) Typewriters.
(b) Stained glass windows.
(c) Cement.
(d) Mandarin coats.
(e) Book of fairy stories.
(f) Tennis balls.

6. If you were a sales manager, what steps would you take to encourage your traveling salesman to be industrious?

7. Give an example of the exercise of salesmanship in other than the commonly understood manner of selling goods:

(a) From ancient history.
(b) From modern history.
(c) From literature.

8. As a test of ability to impart knowledge to others, define in your own language the following:

(a) Salesmanship.
(b) Personality.
(c) Imagination.
(d) Perseverance.
(e) A chair.
(f) A room.
(g) A street.
(h) A town.
(i) A nation.

9. Do you think you have sales ability? Why?

CHAPTER II—Motives Behind All Buying

1. Explain what a "buying motive" is according to the consideration of it in this chapter.

2. Name five of the more important motives.

3. Name three articles the purchase of which will satisfy each of these buying motives.

4. What motives can commonly be appealed to in selling the following?

(a) Gas stove.
(b) Coal stove.
(c) Electric stove.
(d) Dress suit.

(e) Toys.
(f) Tobacco.
(g) Work shirt.
(h) Sextant.
(i) Garden bulbs.

5. What buying motives would you appeal to in the following cases?

(a) Selling a house as an investment.
(b) Selling a house to live in.
(c) Selling a two-family house to live in and as an investment.
(d) Selling a merchant a new showcase for his store.
(e) One hundred textbooks to a school principal.
(f) Selling a player piano to a young married couple neither of whom play.
(g) Selling a summer camp to a family man.
(h) Selling an exclusive agency for collars to a men's furnishing store.
(i) Selling an expensive desk to a small business man.

6. To what should the salesman first make an appeal—how can he do it?

7. How may the salesman determine what buying motive to appeal to?

8. Which of the following appeals are good and which are weak?

(a) An insurance salesman said, "Your principal is safe even if you do get very little interest."
(b) An animal dealer, showing a dog to a lady, said, "You'll find he doesn't bite and he won't bark all night."
(c) A ladies' tailor showing some material to a young lady who dresses in the height of fashion said, "This material will wear like iron; the pattern is conservative so will not become too much out of fashion."
(d) A jeweler showing a pearl necklace places it around the customer's neck and says, "Just look in the mirror, Mrs. Robbins. Those beautiful pearls certainly look charming on you."

9. How would you strengthen the weak appeals in question 8?

CHAPTER III—The Customer's Mental Journey

1. Analyze the episodes contained in the following collateral reading for Chapter I: "Oliver Twist," Chapter 47; "The Adventures of Tom Sawyer," Chapter 2; "Julius Ceasar," Act III, Scene 2, and show *how* attention, interest, desire, and action are secured, also state *when* these mental stages may be considered as secured, and *why* you think so.

2. Analyze the following sale, showing where the mental steps are

developed. A wholesale hardware salesman calls on a hardwareman in a small town in Maine. After the customary greeting, he says, "What do you think of this new pocket tool set, Mr. Blake?" The buyer makes a general non-committal reply after which the salesman remarks that he has a reduced price on roofing material.

The buyer immediately asks for it and after some discussion says, "Next time I'm in the market, I'll think of you, but there's nothing else I need at this time and it isn't worth sending that by itself. I've enough to last for a month at least."

The salesman then mentions granite ware and then garden tools (it being early spring).

Finally the buyer says, "Well, perhaps we can find enough things to make up a shipment," and proceeds to place an order, first for roofing materials and then other items.

3. Observe carefully the next five people you meet and who talk with you. Consider whether their appearance is such as to win favorable attention and why. Report your findings.

4. Look at yourself in the next mirror you see and decide whether you are favorably impressed with your general appearance. Why?

5. Give three examples of sales in which action would be easy to secure.

6. Give three examples of sales in which action would be difficult to secure.

7. Give three examples in which desire is aroused but in which action does not follow (other than cases in which the prospect has not the money).

8. A customer enters a retail grocery store and asks for some Queen Olives. The salesman shows some which the customer says are satisfactory. The salesman then asked, "Have you ever tried the stuffed olives?" "No," says the lady, "my husband does not care for them although I rather like them."

The salesman then shows a bottle of stuffed olives which are a little higher in price than the first lot shown. "No," says the lady, "I don't think I care for them." "Yet they are choice olives, Madam, and I can strongly recommend them. You ought to think of yourself, you know. Take the stuffed olives for yourself and buy some of the others for your husband."

The customer was silent for a moment, then, turning on her heel, said, "I don't think I'll bother with any to-day, after all," and leaves the store.

What caused the change in her attitude and how should the salesman have handled the situation?

CHAPTER IV—Attitudes of Buyer and Salesman

1. How would you handle the sale of a watch, treating it (1) as a retail sale; (2) as a wholesale sale; (3) as a specialty sale?

2. What is the principal difference between retail and specialty selling?

3. It is sometimes said that "wholesale selling is selling in quantities." This, of course, is not so. Show wherein this statement is incorrect.

4. A retail merchant greets with cordiality a salesman from whom he has bought for some years. As the salesman leaves, a young salesman comes in on his first visit. The merchant greets him in a curt, offhand manner. What causes the difference in his attitude?

5. Assume you were the young salesman mentioned in question 4. What would be your general attitude to the merchant? Why?

6. What do you think would be the difference between the general attitude, to the salesman, of the buyer for a city department store and that of a country general store proprietor?

7. Assume that there is a shortage of raw material for paper making and that prices are steadily advancing. How would these conditions affect the attitude of the buyer for a paper mill toward salesmen?

8. The president of a street railroad realizes that it is necessary to raise the fare rate. He arranges to appear before a public utilities commission to present his argument for the raise in rate. What would be the general attitude of the commission to the president?

9. Suppose that when you got home to-night, and were having your supper, a salesman came to the door to sell you a set of "Famous American Short Stories" in five volumes—$2 down and $2 a month for five months.

(a) What would be your general attitude to the salesman and why?

(b) Under what conditions do you think you might be more favorably impressed?

CHAPTER V—Preparation of the Selling Talk

1. Analyze the following sales conditions showing what the talking points are:

(a) To a high-class jeweler: a line of ladies' wrist watches.

(b) To a furniture dealer: a line of very cheap talking machine records.
(c) To a housewife: a line of aluminum ware.
(d) To a retail customer: a dollar box of chocolates.
(e) To the buyer for a factory: lubricating oil.
(f) To a bookkeeper: a correspondence course in accounting.

2. Give three selling arguments that can be used in each of the above-mentioned instances. (In analyzing the articles mentioned in question 1, the students will be more or less unfamiliar with them. The object of these two questions, however, is to test the general ability of the student in finding talking points and putting them into persuasive language.)

3. A securities salesman calling on a prospect gives a discussion of the importance of safety in investment. He then introduces a speculative oil stock.

(a) Analyze this episode.
(b) What arguments would you use in this instance?

4. Suppose you wanted to sell your services (i.e., secure a position). List all the talking points of your services and prepare a brief sales talk on each point.

5. What class of people could use the kind of service you have to offer? If you were one of that class, would you be eager to hire yourself?

6. Why should a variety of sales arguments be memorized until the student is word perfect?

CHAPTER VI—The Generalship of the Preapproach

1. What knowledge might be usefully obtained in the preapproach of a sale of—

(a) Cutlery to a hardwareman.
(b) Cash register to a market.
(c) Leather belting to factories.
(d) Advertising novelties to a tailor.
(e) Newspaper space to a national advertiser.
(f) Magazine space to a hat manufacturer.
(g) Milk to a housewife.

2. How can the salesman estimate the buying power of a retail merchant?

3. How could the salesman of high-priced automobiles find prospects?

4. How can the salesman estimate the buying power of a woman when calling at her home?

5. Give three examples where no preapproaches are necessary.

6. Give three examples where extensive preapproaches are necessary

7. A soap salesman was sent to a big city with instructions to call on every store that sold soap. List all the methods he might use and the sources he might use to secure a complete list of prospects.

8. How might the following information be utilized?

(a) A young lady enters a furniture store. The salesman knows she is about to be married.

(b) A man enters a hardware store to buy a razor. The salesman knows that this man owns an automobile.

(c) A salesman offers an unadvertised line of pickles. He knows the grocer is partial to advertised lines because he finds they sell more readily.

(d) A fish salesman calls on the owner of a summer hotel. He knows that the hotel is only half-filled.

(e) A poultry salesman learns that a concern he has been following up for several months has a new advertising manager.

(f) A salesman of office supplies learns that the purchasing agent for a bank has been dismissed for "general incompetency." The purchasing agent bought heavily from the salesman.

CHAPTER VII—Winning the Interview

1. Suppose you want to interview the buyer for a wholesale grocery house but do not know his name. How can you find it out without expressing your ignorance to anyone connected with the company?

2. A salesman is told that "The buyer will see you in a little while if you care to wait." After half an hour the switchboard operator tells him that she thinks the buyer is going out as he has put his hat on. What should the salesman do under these circumstances?

3. Suppose your card is returned by the boy who says, "Nothing doing, the boss is mad to-day and won't see anybody." What would you do?

4. A salesman for a machine tool house calls on the purchasing agent for a big factory. When he gets there on a Wednesday, he sees a notice saying that the purchasing agent can only see salesmen on Monday, Tuesday, and Friday. The salesman has an important exhibition in a town 200 miles away the next day and cannot possibly wait over, nor can he return in the near future. Yet he has a special small

machine tool that can reduce materially the manufacturing cost of a certain article. He asks the attendant if he will tell the purchasing agent that he has an important offer but is told that it is no use taking the message, as the purchasing agent never sees salesmen except on regular days. What can the salesman do to secure an interview?

5. The buyer for the jewelry department of a store sends word that he will see the salesman the next day. When the salesman calls, the buyer sends word there is nothing he wants, so cannot see the salesman. What should be done?

6. How can the salesman legitimately win the friendliness and co-operation of subordinates?

7. A salesman calls on a retail merchant who is talking to another salesman. Noticing the salesman, the merchant calls out, "Hello, Mr. Jones. Don't bother to stop as there's nothing I want this trip, and I'll be busy with this man for some time." What should the salesman do?

8. A customer visits the furniture department of a big store. A salesman approaches and asks her pleasure. She tells him, "I want to have Mr. Lane wait on me, no one else will do—and I'm in a hurry." She immediately turns away to look at an aisle display. Mr. Lane is out to lunch and won't be back for an hour. What should the salesman do?

CHAPTER VIII—Opening the Interview

1. While waiting on two customers, a third approaches and curtly says to the salesman, "I'm in a hurry, who can attend to me?" All the salesmen are busy. What can the retail salesman do?

2. A customer enters a store when all the salesmen are engaged. After waiting a few minutes, he asks a salesman how long he will have to wait for attention. The salesman says, "I'll be busy for some time—we serve customers in order here. Better ask some other salesman." After a further wait, the customer quietly leaves the store. What was wrong and what could have been done?

3 A salesman calls on a suburban stationer and newsdealer with a line of fountain pens. He greets the buyer in a boisterous manner and says, "Well, old chap, we've decided to give you little fellows a chance to make big money out of selling famous Gazump pens. . . . . I guess even little bits of stores like this can sell if we show you how. . . . . What about it, old chap?" Is the salesman's method of approach good; what would you have done had you been the salesman?

4. A buyer abruptly says to a salesman, "I'm opposed to smoking cigarettes. Before I talk business with you, tell me—do you smoke cigarettes?" The salesman does. How should he deal with the situation?

5. Is it ever necessary for a salesman to first introduce himself and discuss himself (not counting the case of applying for a job)? Example.

6. When should the salesman offer to shake hands?

7. A salesman called on a buyer who was talking with a salesman for a competing house. The buyer said, "I'm going to lunch with Mr Black (the competing salesman) but have half an hour to spare. I don't want a thing though." What should the salesman do, remembering that a competitor is there?

8. A book salesman calls on a housewife. She listens to him but does not invite him into the house although it is raining hard. What should the salesman do?

CHAPTER IX—Methods of Arousing Interest

1. How might the demonstration method of arousing interest be used in the following?

(a) Selling a fountain pen to a business man.
(b) Selling a radio set to a woman.
(c) Selling a collection service to a manufacturer.
(d) Selling paper for printing to an advertising agency.
(e) Selling steel rails to a railroad.
(f) Selling shoes to a jobber.

2. Why is enthusiasm so important in arousing interest?

3. Strengthen the following opening remarks:

(a) By a grocer to a customer, "Are you interested in eggs to-day?"
(b) To a business man in his office, "Have you a few minutes to spare? I have a proposition that I would like to explain to you."
(c) To an automobile owner, "I don't know whether you ever clean your car yourself, but if you do, I would like to sell you some polish."
(d) To a customer in an electrical store, "Would you be interested in an electric toaster to-day?"
(e) To a prospective employer, "I don't suppose you need an errand boy to-day, do you?"

4. What would you do to insure the prospect's first sight of your samples being attractive, in the following cases?

(a) Selling a house to a man looking for a home.
(b) Selling a line of table cutlery to a hardware man.
(c) Selling a watch to a retail customer.
(d) Selling veils in a department store.
(e) Selling shoe polish to a retail shoe merchant.
(f) Selling advertising calenders to tailors.

5. Notice how goods are displayed to you the next five times you buy anything and report your criticism.

6. Illustrate how an arbitrary connection with interests of the prospect might be made in the following instances:

(a) Selling rubber keys for a typewriter to a typist who recently won a speed contest.
(b) Selling advertising service to a clothing store which has recently taken on an advertised brand of ready-to-wear clothes.
(c) Selling bread in a grocery store to a customer who has been in the habit of baking her own bread and has just recovered from an illness.
(d) Selling an automobile to a man who has recently bought a house in the suburbs.

CHAPTER X—Interesting the Retail Customer

1. What general interest-arousing comment may the salesman make to the customer who is "looking around" in a store and stops to look at the following?

Fireless cooker	Mouse trap
Tub skirts	Suitcases
Cigar cutter	Popular detective story
Golf balls	Cuff links

2. State what questions you would ask a retail customer under the following circumstances:

(a) Customer in a novelty shop says she is looking for a present for a friend.
(b) Customer in a fancy goods store asks for a pair of gloves.
(c) Customer in a stationery store asks for some writing paper.
(d) Customer in a toy store asks for "some nice little toy for my nephew."
(e) Customer in a drug store asks for some cough syrup.
(f) Customer in a furniture store says she's looking for a dining room table.

3. How many different articles would you show in the case of the following sales?

Pocketknife	Hair brush
Camera	Banjo
Shoes	Men's hat
Women's hat	Diamond ring
10c. nail brush	

4. A customer asks in a hardware store for a "CCC" pocketknife. The store does not keep them. It specializes in the "B.U." knife which is equal in quality to the "CCC" but the store considers the line better because the manufacturer maintains an unusually efficient inspection service which prevents defective knives leaving the factory. Incorporate this information in a brief sales talk.

5. A man enters a sporting goods store and asks for a dozen "Thomas" golf balls. The store does not keep them. Illustrate how the salesman may proceed to sell the "clip-off" golf balls.

6. A lady enters a furniture store to buy an oak dining room table. The store has some maple tables which it wants to dispose of and which have been marked down. Describe how you would proceed to sell the latter.

7. A lady enters the rug department of a department store. On being approached by the salesman, she says she merely wishes to look around. The salesman noticed that she pays particular attention to some hall runners that have been marked down. What would you do in such a case?

8. A man comes into a drug store and says he's interested in a cheap razor. The store carries three kinds, a $1 razor, a $4 razor, and a $5 one. The $4 is an exclusive brand; the $5 one pays the largest profit. So far as the store is concerned, there is no choice between selling the $4 one and the $5 one. What would you show the customer and what sales talk would you use?

9. A woman is trying on a pair of shoes. She tells the salesman she always wears a 3A, but the salesman finds that she requires a 4B for comfort and fit. He tries on a 4B and asks the customer how it feels "Quite comfortable, I think; but are you sure this is a 3A; I never need a larger size than that," she replies. How would you meet such a situation?

CHAPTER XI—Methods of Creating Desire

1. How can the service of the following offering be applied specifically in the following instances?

(a) A laundry representative calls on a housewife who has a large family for which she does all the sewing.

(b) An insurance agent visits a man of 45 who has recently bought a large estate on which he has a $20,000 mortgage.

(c) A salesman for an advertised line of shirts, which are sold through exclusive agencies placed with men's furnishing stores of the better class, calls on a well-known retailer who is meeting keen chain store competition.

(d) A salesman of adding machines calls on a concern which employs 25 bookkeepers.

2 A bedstead salesman called on a furniture dealer. After some discussion the dealer said, "I'm getting tired of the X Co. (a competing maker of beds); we are always having trouble in straightening out claims for damages, etc. What's your opinion of them?" What would you do and say?

3. Is there anything wrong with the following statements? If so what is it and what improvement would you suggest?

(a) "You agree with me as to the desirability of our goods. I can assure you our prices are right. The A Company are higher than we are, and the B organization is way above us, when you take quality into consideration."

(b) "These are handsome radiators. No one makes anything to compare with them. Even the Gigantic Company's radiators are not equal to them and theirs are considered as good as money can buy."

4. A housewife was considering favorably the purchase of a dinner set from a salesman who called at her house. Not knowing the salesman or his company, she hesitated to place the order. What kind of testimonials could you offer that would win her confidence?

5. Give three examples of the skilful use of testimonials in creating desire and in building up confidence.

6. A buyer for a mail order house terminated the interview with a salesman for a china concern and said, "You have a fine line and there is nothing to cavil at in price or appearance; however, I'll not order this trip." What in your opinion caused the buyer to smother his own desire for the china and what would you have done under the circumstances?

7. Name ten articles that the buyer must personally demonstrate if he is to realize the benefit of them to himself.

8 Name five offerings which it is not practicable for the buyer to demonstrate.

CHAPTER XII—Straight Thinking

1. A salesman is assigned Indiana and Ohio as his territory. He has never been in that part of the country. What general information must he possess and what are the chief sources from which to obtain it? List the classes of information with the subdivisions of each.

2. Collect examples of each of the main types of reasoning; the current advertisements and newspaper articles will furnish abundant material.

3. Assume that you have been requested to undertake to sell pianos (or any other article in which you may be interested) during the coming summer; you decline, or accept. In either case list each of your reasons for your choice, and also each of the reasons on which these first reasons are based. Determine the type of reasoning that you are using in each case.

4. Explain and classify the following fallacies:

(a) Father to his son at dinner—"John, come back and sit down or I'll send you away from the table."

(b) Iron ships cannot float because iron is heavier than water.

(c) Mars is inhabited.

(d) As an intelligent citizen you are naturally interested in.....

(e) Carry a horsechestnut in your pocket if you wish to avoid rheumatism.

(f) Jones is a good business man so he will make a good mayor.

5. Give three examples of general assertions that are unsound.

CHAPTER XIII—Effective Diction

1. Rewrite the following with special effort for clearness and vividness:

"The trouble with Brown seems to be that he generally has the time to do his work if he would only start in in time to get his work done instead of letting things go until a rush comes and then trying to get through when the rest are ready to go."

"Smith deals mostly in small hardware for everyday people. We ought to be able to sell him some stuff if we want to by dropping in to see him now and then when we are sending a man through who is a good talker and keeps in touch with what's going on round about that section of the country, for Smith is an intelligent sort of fellow who likes to have an argument about things in general when there isn't much doing, especially after lunch, because it's rather quiet out there in that part of the town."

2. Prepare a two-minute explanation of the service rendered by one of the following articles: vacuum cleaner, electric iron, student's dictionary, life insurance for children. Aim at crisp, direct statement with illustrations based on familiar ideas and objects.

3. Show the adaptations necessary in question 2 in delivering the explanation to each of the following: banker, farmer, fruit storekeeper's wife (a thrifty foreigner, understanding English fairly well).

4. Prepare an analytical outline of each of three magazine full-page advertisements, bringing the advertisement to class with the outline.

5. Prepare a one-minute argument on one selling point of any of the following: lawnmower, imported dates, sewing machine, fountain pen, carbureter. Vividness, personal appeal, and convincing evidence required.

6. Improve the following statements by making them more definite:

(a) Our goods are best.
(b) Your boy could have a lot of fun with this tool set.
(c) These shoes will last a long time.
(d) A telephone would save you much time.
(e) A new sign on the front of your store would be a good investment to you.
(f) Have a storage tank. You save money on gasoline (said to an automobile owner who buys his gasoline from a garage).

CHAPTER XIV—Objections and How to Answer Them

1. A customer visiting the grocer's shop said, "I want a pound of 'Wellknown' Tea. Oh! how much is it a pound?" "Eighty cents, Madam," said the grocer reaching for a package. "What! Why I can get it from the Traders Grocery Company down the street for 69 cents." How would you answer this objection?

(a) Assuming you knew it to be true.
(b) Assuming you knew it to be untrue.

2. A carpenter visited a hardware store in which he had a charge account which was overdue besides being too large. He ordered a few bags of nails and other things and said, "Have the boy put them in my team. Charge them of course—er—I'll be in on Saturday, by the bye, and make a good-sized payment on my account." The hardware man had told his salesman that no further credit could be given and he was out of town for a few days and could not be appealed to. If you were the salesman, how would you meet the situation?

3. A woman is shown a fashionable hat which the salesperson realizes is peculiarly appropriate. The customer, however, says, "Oh, take that away. I don't like it at all. I think that other hat is the one I want." The other hat is an old-style one that is not at all suited to the customer. What should the salesperson do?

4. An insurance salesman calling on a traveling salesman meets with this objection. "There is only the wife and myself, both the children are now caring for themselves. I own my own home free and clear besides having a policy that will pay $40 a month for life to my wife should I die first. So I see no need for more insurance." If you were the insurance salesman, would you agree with the reasonableness of this objection or could you offset it?

5. A men's furnishing store specialized in medium-priced goods, yet there was an undoubted need for really fine merchandise in that town that was not being filled. In consequence, many men bought their better quality goods in a nearby big city. The proprietor has always told salesmen, "There's no demand for high-priced stuff; I've tried it and lost money on it." The salesman for an exclusive line of men's shirts wishes to place them in that store. How should he go about doing it?

6. A brush salesman calling on a lady at her home is told, "I'll never buy from a peddler again. A young man sold me a dress length some time ago and when it came C. O. D. it was nothing like what he showed me." How should the salesman handle the objection?

CHAPTER XV—Excuses and How to Meet Them

1. On being offered a line of exquisite cigars, a wealthy clubman said, "I can't afford them." How should the salesman meet the excuse?

2. After having carefully explained the benefits of his line of electric fixtures to the buyer for a builder's supply concern, the salesman is told, "I'll think it over and let you know." If you were the salesman what would you do?

3. A salesman representing a jewelry manufacturer calls on a retail jeweler with a new line of Christmas novelties. The jeweler says, "I know all about your proposition and it is nothing we are interested in." Answer the excuse.

4. A proprietor of a small 5 and 10 cent store when offered a line of kitchen knives says, "I always buy them from a friend." What answer should the salesman make?

5. A new salesman calling on a hat store with a line of straw hats

is met with, "Your house treated me shabbily on a former occasion. I'll never do any more business with you." How can the salesman meet the situation?

6. A grocer who is offered a new breakfast food says, "If I can return what I don't sell, I'll give you an order." This is not allowed by the house. How can the salesman answer the grocer?

7. The salesman for a big concern is told, "I always buy from small concerns, they give a more personal attention to me." What can the salesman say?

8. The salesman for a small concern is told, "I always buy from big houses, they have the variety and will give me a better quality of service than a small company can." What can the salesman say?

9. A prospect for an adding machine says, "Yes, it is a good machine and a good thing to run, but it costs too much money."

10. How should the excuse, "I am too busy to decide now," be answered?

CHAPTER XVI—The Diplomacy of the Close

1. In the following cases has the prospect reached that point in the mental journey from attention to action at which the salesman can bid for the order? Give reasons for your answer.

(a) A salesman for a novelty mechanical toy demonstrates it to the buyer for a big toy store. After mentioning the price, the salesman says, "Quite an attractive novelty, isn't it?" The buyer responds, "Just so-so," in an indifferent manner.

(b) On being shown a new line of canned spinach the customer tells the grocer, "I like spinach, but it doesn't seem to me that canned spinach can be nearly so good as fresh."

(c) An insurance salesman gives a clear presentation of the special value of insurance to his prospect—a successful dentist. The dentist then says, "You say that to get the protection I need will cost $1,800 a year—that's rather more than I expected to pay—how much a month is that?"

2. How would you attempt to carry the above three interviews to a successful termination?

3. Explain what is meant by "painting a mental picture."

4. Give an example of a closing summary which depicts the customer using the goods when the following articles are bought:

Summer bungalow.
Beautiful oil painting.

Expensive sealskin coat.
Rare set of china.
Motor boat.

5. How should the salesman proceed in the following cases?

(a) The purchasing agent for a furniture manufacturer has recently tested a new glue. When the salesman calls, the purchasing agent says, "Well, your glue does all you claim for it, but I don't think I'll change from my present house after all. It has the edge on you for price and there's not enough difference in quality to justify the change."

(b) After looking over a line of vacuum cleaners, the buyer says, "I could give you a good order for these. That reminds me, the wife wanted a vacuum cleaner. I suppose you'd send one to the house wouldn't you, as a test sample, you know? You wouldn't want to send me a bill for it would you?"

(c) After telling the salesman he could send the set of Shakespeare in fifteen volumes on monthly payment terms, the lady of the house refuses to sign the order saying that her husband has told her never to sign anything without first seeing him. The publishers will not accept unsigned orders.

(d) A hardware man after much hesitation had planned a fall order for carpenters' tools. Just as the salesman is about to leave the hardware man says, "After thinking it over, I'm sure I ought to wait before buying more stock. I'll have to ask you to cross off that order—Next time you're 'round, I'll surely give you an order."

CHAPTER XVII—Things to Remember When Closing

1. A printer's salesman called on a small publisher who occasionally gave him some business. The publisher began a discussion on the trend in modern fiction and gradually became more and more intense on the subject. How could the salesman switch the conversation back to printing?

2. How may decision be secured in the following instances?

(a) A customer in a stationery store is buying a box of stationery and is doubtful as to whether to buy initial stationery or plain.

(b) A customer is buying a flashlight and does not know whether to buy a vest-pocket size or a larger one.

3. A wholesale salesman has just received an order for linoleums from a new customer. Describe what he should do or say after writing the order and securing the signature.

4. A customer has just bought several packages of garden seeds from a general store. What can the salesman do to increase the sale?

5. The salesman for a collar manufacturer has presented his samples to a men's furnishing store. The buyer says, "Well, I like your line; they are rather better than we've been selling, but I believe they'll sell. Now I want your suggestions as to what patterns to buy and the quantity." On what should the salesman base his judgment?

6. Give an illustration of the policy of mentioning in your conversation a larger amount than you expect the prospect to buy.

7. Correct the following: A salesman is selling table lamps to a furniture store. He says, "Now, Mr. Day, I have explained to you the advantage of my lamps and you have seen that they are beautiful in design and charming in finish. I hope you will now give me an order for some."

8. A salesman offering canned peaches to a grocer has evidently aroused desire. The grocer asks the price, and on hearing it says, "The price seems very low for those peaches. I'm afraid there's something wrong with them." How should the salesman proceed from this point to close the sale?

CHAPTER XVIII—Friendly Relations with the Buyer

1. Suggest three ways in which the friendliness of the wholesale buyer may be won.

2. Suggest three ways in which the friendliness of the retail customer may be won.

3. What means of offering the customer "service plus" could be taken in selling?

(a) A correspondence school course.
(b) Advertising space.
(c) A complicated piece of machinery.
(d) The commodity you sell or in which you are interested.

4. What kind of general "service plus" would be appreciated by?

(a) Retail merchants.
(b) Wholesale merchants.
(c) Purchasing agents for factories.
(d) Office managers (who also buy supplies).
(e) Retail grocery customers.
(f) Housewives (solicited by specialty salesmen).

5. Observe the conditions pertaining to the next five different articles you purchase and decide what "serviceplus," if any, would have pleased you.

6. Report your decisions and whether you believe you would be justified in expecting them, taking into consideration general business customs and the expense involved in your "service plus" desires.

CHAPTER XIX—The Retail Satisfaction that Creates Good-Will

1. A retail customer asks the salesperson for a certain exclusive brand of silk stockings. The store does not carry them, so the salesman says, "We do not carry that particular brand but have some excellent ones which, while much cheaper, will give splendid satisfaction." The customer replies, "No, thank you. I've worn the other brand for a long time and do not care to change. I have only just moved into this town and don't know where they are sold." The salesman knows who sells them. Should he tell the customer? Give reasons for your answer.

2. The following articles are sold at a low price but cannot be guaranteed because of certain deficiencies. How would you describe their deficiencies to a customer?

Granite ware	Doll carriage
Saw	Suite of furniture
Hosiery	Cravats

3. A customer returns a pair of shoes. He complains angrily that the leather is very poor; the shoes are obviously worn through, yet the customer bought them less than two weeks ago. After some tactful questioning, the customer states that they got wet, and going home in the train he put his feet on the car radiator which was steaming hot. The salesman explains that wet leather subjected to such heat will have the life burnt out of it. The customer says bluntly, "That's a pack of lies, it's rotten leather and you'll give me my money back or there'll be trouble." What should the salesman do? Remember that the customer's good-will is earnestly desired.

4 A customer orders an ebony table costing $650 from a high-grade store. It is something that has to be specially ordered and is not an article that would sell in the usual way. In due time it is made and sent for delivery. The customer returns it with the statement, "Don't want it now; changed my mind about it." What would you do if you were the salesman?

5. A customer calls on a grocer and says, "I am recommended to your store by Mrs. Myers and want a few things." Mrs. Myers is a good charge customer, although getting slow in settling the account.

The customer orders over $50 worth of goods and concludes with, "That's all now, have them put into the car (a cheap one, incidentally). I'll start a charge account right away." What should be the salesman's plan of procedure?

6. If you owned a jewelry store, what kind of instructions would you issue to your salespeople with regard to developing good-will? Why?

CHAPTER XX—The Salesman and the Sales Manager

NOTE: In all the following problems, assume you are the sales manager and are called upon to solve them.

1. A small manufacturer of rubber goods, selling to the retail trade in Illinois, decides to cover more of the country. His salesmen average $50,000 worth of business a year and his present output of $250,000 is sold by five men. Additional capital makes it possible to increase production to $2,000,000. The sales manager is told to:

(a) Decide how many extra men to hire.
(b) What territory to give them.

2. A kitchen article selling direct to consumer costs 25 cents to make; this includes all costs except selling costs. The article retails for $1. The plan of selling is to hire crew managers on a small salary and bonus, and crew men on straight commission plus a 25 cent allowance every day (working six days a week) for incidental car fares and transportation from one town to another. (Each crew manager is to have six men.) It is felt that men cannot be retained unless they earn at least $25 a week.

(a) What commissions would you pay the crew men?
(b) What bonus and salary would you give the crew manager?
(c) How much would each salesman have to sell to average the $25 net weekly earnings?
(d) How many crew managers and men would be required to insure a yearly sale of $200,000 worth of goods?
(e) What home office sales force would be necessary to handle the sales?
(f) Would supervisors (i.e., sales managers to supervise the territories of, say, ten crew managers) be necessary?
(g) If so, how should they be paid?
(h) What net profit would the company show on your analysis, assuming a loss from lost samples and other causes, of 1 per cent of sales?

(i) What dividend could be declared on a common stock capitalization of $25,000 after carrying forward 10 per cent of net profits for depreciation?

3. Suppose a company making a high-grade filing cabinet finds itself with a very heavy stock, and sales not quite up to normal. The production department tells the sales manager that unless it gets more orders right away it will have to go on to a four-day-week schedule.

The general manager after conference with the heads of departments tells the sales manager that for the next three months a special appropriation of approximately 5 per cent of normal sales can be used to stimulate business. (The normal sales for the next three months are $450,000.) There are several ways in which the money can be used such as:

(a) Extra magazine and newspaper advertising.
(b) Special trade discounts.
(c) Commissions or bonuses to salesmen.
(d) By a circularizing campaign.
(e) One or two extra salesmen to specialize on the slow-moving goods.
(f) Many others that the sales manager can readily conceive.

How would you handle this situation?

4. A company is organized to make a complete line of stationery goods (i.e., social and commercial stationery, account books, scribbling blocks, calendars, etc.). A sales manager is hired and given a free hand to plan his organization within the following limits:

(a) The company must sell not less than $500,000 worth of goods yearly to "break even."
(b) It refuses to make any "specials," relying entirely on its regular line to get the business.
(c) It will only make quality goods and will not attempt to compete on prices with other concerns.
(d) It insists on commencing operation in New England.

Plan out the sales policies and organization.

CHAPTER XXI—The Knowledge that Gives Breadth

1. Give the names of any books and trade journals concerned with your line of goods (assuming you are a salesman) that you have read recently. If you have not read any, list those you have heard about.

2. If you are not a salesman, list the names of half a dozen magazines that specialize on business.

3. List the kind of information needed by:

(a) Specialty salesman selling envelope sealers.
(b) Specialty salesman selling gas irons.
(c) Wholesale salesman selling tea.
(d) Specialty salesman selling special automatic machinery.
(e) Retail salesman selling roofing material.
(f) Wholesale salesman selling pharmaceuticals.

4 Suggest the sources of the information needed by the six foregoing salesmen.

5. Name four sources from which the retail salesman can get information about the goods sold in his store.

6. What facts should the salesman have about?
(a) The company he represents.
(b) His competitors.
(c) Trade conditions generally.

7. A hardware man decides to open another store in a nearby town. He writes to his regular jobbing house as follows: "I want some help as to what to buy for the new store; please send a salesman who can advise with me." What should the salesman know to be able to help the customer in this case?

8. What other subjects in addition to this text should be studied to "round out" the salesman's general effectiveness?

CHAPTER XXII—Types of Customers

1. What would be the attitude of the following buyers toward the salesmen?

(a) The wholesale buyer who is pompous, quite clever, and given to wordy discussions on the merits of his own opinions.
(b) The wholesale buyer who is ignorant, conceited, and decides matters by snap judgment.
(c) The stolid, skeptical, yet able purchasing agent for a woodworking plant, who continually finds fault with the offer and who never buys without first trying to secure lower prices or better terms.
(d) The good-natured buyer who agrees to everything the salesman says, but refuses to buy until he has had time to consider the proposition.
(e) The buyer of supplies for a bank who always appears worried and nervous and who listens listlessly to the buyer and who seldom gives any definite decision but replies, "I don't know what to say," to nearly all questions.

(f) The careless, easy-going buyer who always interrupts the salesman to tell him a story irrelevant to business.

2. What should be the salesman's general conduct in each of the above cases?

CHAPTER XXIII—Characteristic Retail Types

1. What would be the attitude of the following customers toward the retail salesman?

(a) The haughty, supercilious lady who feels that everyone should give her first consideration.
(b) The average boy of ten who is sent to the grocer's to buy some much needed trifle.
(c) The young couple who are always deferring to each other's judgment and almost disagree in fighting for each other's wishes.
(d) The young man who always appears terribly bored.
(e) The young lady who gushes enthusiastically over everything or anything.

2. What should be the salesman's general conduct in each of the above cases?

CHAPTER XXIV—The Make-Up of Personality

1. Explain why personality plays such an important part in salesmanship.

2. Mention six essential traits to which particular attention needs to be given if the salesman is to develop his personality.

3. Do you consider that you have a good personality?

(a) Why?
(b) If not, what are you doing to develop it?

4. List the names of six people you particularly admire, then try to analyze their personality.

5. Think of someone you dislike. Analyze his personality and see if the reason for your dislike is not merely some habit or mannerism which, once forgotten or passed over, may enable you to find common grounds for friendliness.

CHAPTER XXV—The Leaven of Enthusiasm

1. Discuss the relationship of knowledge of the salesman's offering to his enthusiasm for it.

2. What are the distinguishing features of the enthusiastic salesman?

3. Are you enthusiastic about your job (or your prospects)? Why?

4. Why does enthusiasm react so favorably on the work habit?

5. What other qualities does the episode relating to the sale of calendars to the grocer illustrate in addition to enthusiasm?

6. What is the effect on others of?

(a) Apathy.
(b) Enthusiasm.

CHAPTER XXVI—The Habit of Industry

1. Does the habit of industry tend to make the salesman enthusiastic? Why?

2. Do you think you are industrious? Why?

3. If you were called upon to advise a young man on how to be industrious, what would you tell him?

4. Do the wholesale and specialty salesmen need to pay more attention to the development of industry than the retail salesman does? Why?

CHAPTER XXVII—The Courtesy that Attracts and Pleases

1. Do you consider yourself courteous? Why?

2. What is the difference between courtesy and politeness?

3. Discuss the relationship between keeping well groomed and being courteous.

4. Why is it important for the aggressive salesman to pay particular attention to his manners and bearing?

5. Have you any mannerism of speech or action that others may think of as discourteous, or at least inconsiderate?

CHAPTER XXVIII—The Fire of Courage

1. Do you think you possess courage? Why?

2 If you were called upon to tell a group of salesmen about the importance of courage to success in selling, what would you say?

3. Do honesty and honorable methods develop courage? Why?

4. What are the main differences between the two aspects of courage presented in this chapter?

5. How may a salesman overcome the dread of calling on a particularly disagreeable customer?

CHAPTER XXIX—The Lubricant of Tact

1. Would you credit yourself with being especially tactful? Why?

2. Write a brief essay on the importance of tact in salesmanship.

3. Ask yourself, honestly, what your general attitude toward business is. Is it indefinite or definite? Low or high? Selfish or unselfish? Gloomy or cheerful? Is it material or spiritual? Why?

4. Having studied this book, what are you doing about applying the principles of salesmanship to your everyday life?

5. What are you going to study next?

APPENDIX B

SUPPLEMENTARY READING LIST

CHAPTER I—Study and Practice of the Art of Salesmanship

		Ch.	
Brisco, Norris A.,	Fundamentals of Salesmanship,	2.	Salesmanship.
Dickens, Charles,	Oliver Twist,	47.	
Douglas, Archer Wall,	Traveling Salesmanship,	1.	The Nature and Function of Salesmanship.
Drever, James,	The Psychology of Industry,	11.	The Art of the Salesman.
Hawkins, Norval A.,	The Selling Process,	1.	The "Sales."
Hoover, Simon R.,	Salesmanship,	1.	What Is Salesmanship?
Moody, Walter D.,	Men Who Sell Things,	1.	The New Era.
Munsterberg, Hugo,	Psychology and Industrial Efficiency,	23.	Buying and Selling.
Pearson, George Conover,	Selling Your Services,	19.	Selling Your Services.
Peirce, Frederick,	The Human Side of Business.	4.	Salesmanship.
Read, Harlan Eugene,	Salesmanship,		Lesson 1. The Importance of Salesmanship.
Shakespeare, William,	Julius Caesar,		Act III, Scene II.
Twain, Mark,	The Adventures of Tom Sawyer,	2.	
Whitehead, Harold,	Common Sense in Business,	19.	What Is Salesmanship?

CHAPTER II—Motives Behind All Buying

		Ch.	
Angell, James R.,	Psychology,	16.	Important Human Instincts.
Hess, Herbert W.,	Productive Advertising,	3.	Instincts.
Hollingworth, Harry L.,	Advertising and Selling,	13.	Instincts, Their Strength and Nature.

		14. The Relation of the Strength of the Chief Instincts and Interests.
Ivey, Paul Wesley,	Elements of Retail Salesmanship,	4. Knowing the Customer.
Jones, John G.,	Salesmanship and Sales Management,	7. Part I, Human Appeals that Sell.
Raymond, Charles Harvey,	Modern Business Writing,	6. Instincts.
Scott, Walter Dill,	The Psychology of Advertising,	15. Human Instincts.
Strong, Edward K.,	The Psychology of Selling Life Insurance,	Lessons X and XI, Man's Instinctive Behavior Toward Human Beings.
Tipper, Hotchkiss, Hollingsworth and Parsons,	Principles of Advertising,	8. Chief Human Needs and their Satisfaction.

The following collateral reading is intended for those students interested in the psychological aspect of salesmanship.

Adams, Henry F.,	Advertising and Its Mental Laws,	5. Informing the Customer.
Angell, James R.,	Psychology,	15. Reflex Action and Instinct.
Edie, Lionel D.,	Principles of the New Economics,	2. Economic Expression of Instincts.
Hollingworth, Harry L.,	Advertising and Selling,	2. The Nervous Basis of Man's Mental Processes.
Hunter, Walter S.,	General Psychology,	3. Pages 174, 175, The Classification of Instincts.
James, Williams,	Psychology, Briefer Course,	25. Instincts.
Pillsbury, W. B.,	Essentials of Psychology,	10. Instincts.
Pyle, Wm. Henry,	The Outlines of Educational Psychology,	4. Instincts.
Thorndyke, Edward L.,	Educational Psychology Briefer Course,	2,3. Man's Equipment of Instincts and Capacity.
		4. Original Satisfiers and Annoyers.

Watson, John B.,	Psychology from the Standpoint of the Behaviorist,	6. Heredity Moods of Response: Emotions.
		7. Heredity Moods of Response, Instincts.
Woodworth, Robert S.,	Psychology,	8. Inventory of Human Instincts and Primary Emotions.

CHAPTER III—The Customer's Mental Journey

		Ch.
Atkinson, William Walker,	The Psychology of Salesmanship,	7. The Psychology of Purchase.
Brisco, Norris A.,	Retail Salesmanship,	15. Mental Stages of a Sale.
Clapp, John Mantle,	Language for Men of Affairs (Vol. 1),	14. What Business Conversation Is.
Cody, Sherwin,	How to Deal with Human Nature in Business,	4. The Principles of Salesmanship.
Davis and Lingham,	Business English and Correspondence,	9. The Selling Letter.
Ivey, Paul Wesley,	Elements of Retail Salesmanship,	8. The Selling Process.
Kitson, Harry Dexter,	The Mind of the Buyer,	1. The Stream of Thought in the Sale.
Raymond, Charles Harvey,	Modern Business Writings,	9. The Steps in the Selling Appeal.
Tipper, Hotchkiss, Hollingsworth and Parsons,	The Principles of Advertising,	9. Chief Classes of Advertisements.

CHAPTER IV—Attitudes of Buyer and Salesman

		Ch.
Barrett, Harry J.,	How to Sell More Goods,	1. Told in a Pullman Smoking Room.
Cody, Sherwin,	How to Deal with Human Nature in Business (Part IV),	2. Different Kinds of Salesmen and Their Duties.
Douglas, Archer Wall,	Traveling Salesmanship,	5. Contact with Customers.
Farrington, Frank,	The Successful Salesman,	5. Understanding the Customer.
		6. What Customers Want.

Hotchkin, William R.,	Making More Money in Store Keeping,	70. The Salespersons' Attitude toward the Customer.
Lorimer, George Horace,	Letters from a Self-Made Merchant to His Son,	Letter 10.
Moody, Walter D.,	Men Who Sell Things,	12. The Right Kind of Salesman. 20. The Salesman's Relation to the Buyer.

CHAPTER V—The Preparation of the Selling Talk

		Ch.
Benedict-Roche, Adelaide,	Salesmanship for Women,	8. Importance of Preparing Selling Points.
Brisco, Norris A.,	Retail Salesmanship,	16. Selling Points.
Clapp, John Mantle,	Language for Men of Affairs (Vol. 1),	7. The Sales Talk.
Hawkins, Norval A.,	The Selling Process,	4. Preparation.
Ivey, Paul Wesley,	Elements of Retail Salesmanship,	2 and 3. Knowing the Goods.
Lee, James Melvin,	Language for Men of Affairs (Vol. II),	27. Knowing the Product.
Lorimer, George Horace,	Letters from a Self-Made Merchant to his Son,	Letter 11.
Nystrom, Paul H.,	Automobile Selling,	10. Demonstrating the Car.
Osborn, Alex F.,	The Short Course in Advertising,	17. Analysis of the Customer's Attitude.
Pierce, Frederick,	The Human Side of Selling,	10. Sales Methods and Ammunition.
Whitehead, Harold,	The Business of Selling,	6. The Commodity.
	Common Sense in Business,	18. Standardized vs. Individualized Sale-Talks.

CHAPTER VI—The Generalship of the Preapproach

		Ch.
Atkinson, William Walker,	The Psychology of Salesmanship,	6. The Preapproach.
Barrett, Harold J.,	How to Sell More Goods,	2. Selling the Customer Direct.

Conyngton, Hugh R.	Financing an Enterprise, Vol. III.	41. Private Presentation.
		42. Among Strangers.
Douglas, Archer Wall,	Traveling Salesmanship,	2. Preparations for the Road.
Hawkins, Norval A.,	The Selling Process,	5. Prospecting.
Jones, John G.,	Salesmanship and Sales Management,	3. Preliminary to the Interview.
Whitehead, Harold,	The Business of Selling,	9. The Preapproach.
Young, Melvin,	The Science and Art of Writing Life Insurance,	Lesson 4. The Art of Securing Prospects.

CHAPTER VII—Winning the Interview

		Ch.
Farrington, Frank,	The Successful Salesman,	7. Keeping up the Customer List.
Hawkins, Norval A.,	The Selling Process,	6. Planning the Approach and the Audience.
Leichter, E.,	Successful Selling,	3. The Approach.
Marden, Orison Swett,	Selling Things,	21. Finding Customers.
Shaw, A. W., Company	The Knack of Selling,	Book V. Getting in to See the Prospect.
Strong, Edward K.,	The Psychology of Selling Life Insurance,	Lesson 25. Securing the Interview.

CHAPTER VIII—Opening the Interview

		Ch.
Atkinson, William Walker,	The Psychology of Salesmanship,	8. The Approach.
Brisco, Norris A.,	Fundamentals of Salesmanship	7. Appearance.
James, Wm.,	Psychology, Briefer Course,	13. Attention.
Jones, John G.,	Salesmanship and Sales Management,	4. The Interview.
Moody, Walter D.,	Men Who Sell Things,	17. Dress and Orderliness.
Munsterberg, Hugo,	Business Psychology,	8. Attention.
Norton, Helen Rich,	Retail Selling,	6. Approaching Customers and Starting Sales.

Nystrom, Paul H.,	Retail Selling and Store Management,	6. Attracting Attention.
Scott, Walter Dill,	The Theory of Advertising,	2. Attention.
Young, Melvin,	The Science and Art of Writing Life Insurance,	Lesson V. The Art of Approaching Prospects.

CHAPTER IX—Methods of Arousing Interest

		Ch.
Atkinson, William Walker,	The Psychology of Salesmanship,	9. The Demonstration.
Hawkins, Norval A.,	The Selling Process,	8. Gaining Attention and Awakening Interest.
Hoover, Simon R.,	Salesmanship,	7. The Demonstration.
Kitson, Harry Dexter,	The Mind of the Buyer,	5. How to Arouse Interest in a Commodity.
Scott, Walter Dill,	The Theory of Advertising,	10. Apperception.
Shaw, A. W., Company,	The Knack of Selling,	Book 2. Managing the Interview.
Strong, Edward K.,	The Psychology of Selling Life Insurance.	Lesson 26. Diverting Prospect's Attention to my Proposition.
Whitehead, Harold,	Common Sense in Business,	20. The Salesman and the Order Taker.
Young, Melvin,	The Science and Art of Writing Life Insurance,	6. The Art of Presenting a Proposition.

CHAPTER X—Interesting the Retail Customer

		Ch.
Brisco, Norris A.,	Retail Salesmanship,	14. The Study of the Customer.
Fisk, James W.,	Retail Selling,	10. Principles of Salesmanship.
Hotchkin, William R.,	Making More Money in Store Keeping,	73. How to Talk About Merchandise to the Customer.
Maxwell, Wm.,	Salesmanship,	3. "Anything Else Today."
Moody, Walter D.,	Men Who Sell Things,	18. Retail Salesmen.
Norton, Helen Rich,	Retail Selling,	9. Suggestion and Substitution.

Nystrom, Paul H.,	Retail Selling and Store Management,	7. Arousing Interest, Desire and Determination.
Whitehead, Harold,	How to Run a Store,	11. The Lost Art of Salesmanship.

CHAPTER XI—Methods of Creating Desire

		Ch.
Hawkins, Norval A.,	The Selling Process,	9. Persuading and Creating Desire.
Kitson, Harry Dexter,	The Mind of the Buyers,	8. Desire.
Marden, Orison Swett,	Selling Things,	11. How Suggestion Helps in Selling.
Raymond, Charles Harvey,	Modern Business Writing,	13. Awakening Desire, Winning Belief.
Strong, Edward K.,	The Psychology of Selling Life Insurance,	Lesson 30. Arousing Desire.
Whitehead, Harold,	The Business of Selling,	12. Arousing Desire.

CHAPTER XII—Straight Thinking

		Ch.
Angell, James R.,	Psychology,	12. Forms and Practices of Reasoning.
Baker and Huntington,	The Principles of Argumentation,	1, 2, 3.
Foster, W. T.,	Argumentation and Debating,	1, 2, 4–8, 11.
Gowin, Enoch Burton,	Developing Executive Ability,	13. Tests of Reasoning.
Jevons, William Stanley,	Logic,	Elementary, the whole work; advanced, first half most important.
	Principles of Logic,	
O'Neill, Laycock, and Scales,	Argumentation and Debate,	1–8, 11–14.
Pyle, William Henry,	The Outlines of Educational Psychology,	15. Thinking.
Robinson, A. T.,	The Application of Logic,	The whole text, without exception.
Woodworth, Robert S.,	Psychology,	18. Reasoning.

CHAPTER XIII—Effective Diction

		Ch.
Brisco, Norris A.,	Retail Salesmanship,	8. Speech and Voice.
Clapp, John Mantle,	Language for Men of Affairs (Vol. I),	5. Speaking Distinctly.
Davis and Lingham,	Business English,	The whole work.
Greever and Jones,	The Century Handbook,	The whole work, it is a manual for correction of errors.
Hill, A. S.,	Principles of Rhetoric,	The whole work.
Kelly, Fred C.	Business Profits and Human Nature,	22. The Voice of the Average Man.
Mosher, Joseph A.	Pronunciation,	6. The Effective Speaking Voice.

CHAPTER XIV—Objections and How to Answer Them

Collateral reading for this chapter is included in the list at the end of Chapter XV.

CHAPTER XV—Excuses and How to Meet Them

		Ch.
Benedict-Roche, Adelaide,	Salesmanship for Women,	10. How to Overcome Objections.
Brisco, Norris A.,	Retail Salesmanship,	117. Objections and Suggestions.
Butler and Burd,	Commercial Correspondence,	9. Complaints—How to Adjust Them.
Davis and Lingham,	Business English and Correspondence,	12. Complaints and Adjustments.
Gardner, Edward Hall,	Effective Business Letters,	9. Adjustment Letters.
Hawkins, Norval A.,	The Selling Process,	10. Handling Objections.
Marden, Orison Sweet,	Selling Things,	18. Meeting and Fore-stalling Objections.
Nystrom, Paul H.,	Automobile Selling,	11. Objections and How to Meet Them.
O'Neill, Laycock, and Scales,	Argumentation and Debate.	15. Refutation.
Stevenson, John Alford,	Meeting Objections	All of the book.
Strong, Edward K.,	The Psychology of Selling Life Insurance,	Lesson 29. Handling Objections.
Whitehead, Harold,	The Business of Selling,	8. Objections.
Young, Melvin,	The Science and Art of Writing Life Insurance.	Lesson 9. Argument.

CHAPTER XVI—The Diplomacy of the Close

		Ch.
Adams, Henry F.,	Advertising and Its Mental Laws,	14. Action.
Atkinson, William Walker,	The Psychology of Salesmanship,	10. The Closing.
Hawkins, Norval A.,	The Selling Process,	11. Securing Decision and Obtaining Signatures.
Hollingworth, Harry L.,	Advertising and Selling,	12. Provoking the Response.
Hoover, Simon R.,	Salesmanship,	8. Closing the Sale.
Kitson, Harry Dexter,	The Mind of the Buyer,	13. The Psychological Moment for the Sale.
Leichter, E.,	Successful Selling,	5. The Closing.
Norton, Helen Rich,	Retail Selling,	6. Concluding the Sale.
Raymond, Charles Harvey,	Modern Business Writing,	17. Causing the Prospect to Act at Once.
Shaw, A. W., Company,	The Knack of Selling,	Book 3. How and When to Close.
Strong, Edward K.,	The Psychology of Selling Life Insurance,	Lesson 31. Closing the Sale.

CHAPTER XVII—Things to Remember when Closing

		Ch.
Douglas, Archer Wall,	Traveling Salesmanship,	4. Work on the Road.
Gardner, Edward Hall,	New Collection Methods,	14. Cooperation with the Sales Department.
Hawkins, Norval A.,	The Selling Process,	12. The Get-away and Future Orders.
Marden, Orison Swett,	Selling Things,	17. The Man at the Other End of the Bargain.
Scott, Walter D.,	Influencing Men in Business,	5, 6. When to Use Argument and when Suggestion in Influencing Men.
Young, Melvin,	Science and Art of Writing Life Insurance,	Lesson VII, the Art of Delivering Policies.

CHAPTER XVIII—Friendly Relations with the Buyer

		Ch.
Aughinbaugh, W. E.,	Selling Latin America,	22. The Salesman and the Customer.

Douglas, Archer Wall,	Traveling Salesmanship,	14. The Human Equation.
Frederick, J. George,	Modern Sales Management,	20. The Service Principle in Selling.
Kelly, Fred C.,	Business Profits and Human Nature,	15. Finding the Key Note.
Kitson, Harry Dexter,	The Mind of the Buyer,	14. Satisfaction—The Goal.
Shaw, A. W., Company,	Personality in Business,	13. The Public be Pleased.
Whitehead, Harold,	Common Sense in Business,	23. Selling "Service."
	The Business Career of Peter Flint,	10 Selling Insurance.
		11. Making Progress.

CHAPTER XIX—The Retail Satisfaction that Creates Good-Will

		Ch.
Barrett, Harold J.,	How to Sell More Goods,	6. Just Selling.
Brisco, Norris A.,	Retail Salesmanship,	11. Service.
Fisk, James W.,	Retail Selling,	8. Knowing the Store and the Merchandise.
Hoover, Simon R.,	Salesmanship,	12, 13. Department Store Instructions.
Hungerford, Edward,	The Romance of a Great Store,	4. Displaying and Selling the Goods.
Norton, Helen Rich,	Retail Selling,	11. Service.
Nystrom, Paul H.,	The Economics of Retailing,	6. Retail Salespeople and their Work.
	Retail Selling and Store Management,	9. Special Problems in Retail Salesmanship.
Shaw, A. W., Company,	Personality in Business,	9. Personal Service that Pays.
	Selling Methods,	12. Service that Brings Customers Back.
Swinney, John B.,	Merchandising,	2. Part II, Merchandising Policies.

CHAPTER XX—The Salesman and the Sales Manager

		Ch.
Aughinbaugh, W. E.,	Selling Latin America,	21. Methods of Doing Business.
Cherington, Paul T.,	The Elements of Marketing,	1. The Elements of Marketing.
Diemer, Hugo,	Industrial Organization and Management,	17. Reports to Executives.

Edie, Lionel D.,	Principles of the New Economics,	9. Markets, Their Principles and Strategy.
Frederick, J. George,	Modern Sales Management,	4. Building a Good Sales Organization.
		6. The Shaping of Sound Marketing Policies.
Galloway, Lee,	Office Management,	23. The Sphere of Sales Management.
		6. Work in the Sales Promotion Department.
Hayward and White,	Chain Stores,	7. Sales Problems.
Hoyt, Charles W.,	Scientific Sales Management,	3. What is Scientific Sales Management?
Jones, John G.,	Salesmanship and Sales Management,	1. Part II, Sales Management.
Maxwell, Wm.,	Salesmanship,	8. Management of Traveling Men.
McClelland, Frank C.,	Office Training and Standards,	8. The Sales Department.
Perrin and Babb,	Commerical Law Cases (Vol. I),	3. Sales.
Russell, Frederic A.,	Management of the Sales Organization,	5. Territory.
Shaw, A. W.,	An Approach to Business Problems,	12. Agencies of Demand Creation—Direct Salesmen.
Swinney, John B.,	Merchandising.	5. Selling and Sales Supervision.

CHAPTER XXI—The Knowledge that Gives Breadth

		Ch.
Brisco, Norris A., Field, Clifton C.,	Retail Salesmanship, Retail Buying,	12. Knowledge of the Goods. Part I, The Merchant as a Buyer.
Gowin, Enoch Burton,	Developing Executive Ability,	28. Intellectual Preparedness.
Hoover, Simon R.,	Salesmanship,	4. The Salesman's Preparation.
Kelly, Fred C.,	Business Profits and Human Nature,	10. The Costliness of Vanity.
Norton, Helen Rich,	Retail Selling,	7. Selling Points and Their Presentation.

Nystrom, Paul A.,	Automobile Selling,	8. What the Automobile Salesman Should Know About His Car.
Osborne, Alex F.,	A Short Course in Advertising,	23. The Salesman and the Advertiser.
Raymond, Charles Harvey,	Modern Business Writing,	2. The Product.
Russell, Frederic A.,	Management of the Sales Organization,	3. The Salesman's Training.
Scott, Walter D.,	Influencing Men in Business,	7. Making Arguments Effective.
Vanderlip, Frank A.,	Business and Education,	5. The Business Man's Reading.

CHAPTER XXII—Types of Customers

The collateral reading for this chapter is included under Chapter XXIII.

CHAPTER XXIII—Characteristic Retail Types

		Ch.
Fisk, James W.,	Retail Selling,	9. Studying the Customer.
Hawkins, Norval A.,	The Selling Process,	7. Sizing up the Buyer.
Hess, Herbert W.,	Productive Advertising,	19. Getting the Will of the Crowd.
Hollingworth, Harry L.,	Vocational Psychology,	2. The Search for Phrenological and Physiognomic Principles.
Ivey, Paul Wesley,	Elements of Retail Salesmanship,	5. Knowing the Customer.
Norton, Helen Rich,	Retail Selling,	12. Customers.
Whitehead, Harold,	The Business of Selling,	16. The Customer.
	Common Sense in Business	22. Character Analysis.

CHAPTER XXIV—The Make-Up of Personality

		Ch.
Angell, James R.,	Psychology,	22. Character and the Will.
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